

THIS NUMBER CONTAINS

"KENYON'S WIFE"

By LUCY C. LILLIE, author of "Prudence," "Nan," etc.

COMPLETE

MARCH, 1887

LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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He saw Velce's eyes dancing and her hands clapping. Then he leaned upon his axe, and felt that he looked like a martial hero at the moment of victory.

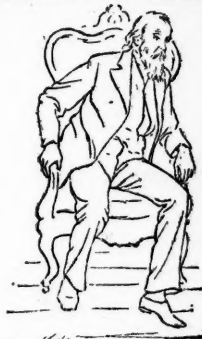


"Fact is," said Hurk, in reply to Thorway's expressed doubts, "a man that drop a deer at three or four hundred yds with a rifle, an' off-hand at that, can get a thing there is worth havin' in these parts."



"I hope your bad luck will follow you and Black Belle will go lame on the way."

"Why so cruel?" asked Thornway.
"Because then you will have to come back to the bayou," said Velce. She said it so fearlessly, and in the presence of so many witnesses, that Thornway was surprised; but he was relieved when the girl's father and brothers broke into a hearty chorus of laughter.



"Well," said the old man, sharp "what's the matter? Never see people in one boat before?"
"Not before breakfast," drawled Hurk.
"An' when one of 'em was a gal," Rote, by way of assistance.

"Oh, noffin, noffin, massa; only 'pears like you'd 'a' got a better hoss dan dat if you wuz a-gittin' him for yo'self. But city folks ain't to be 'spected o' knowin' everythin' 'bout everythin', leas'tways 'bout hosses."

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"Come in," said her brother.
"Paul," said Kate, with more animation than he had seen her display in years, "where did you find that original?"



"Ever so glad to know you, sir," the major, extending a small hand, a grasp of which nevertheless made Thorway wince; the major also smiled, a Thorway was obliged to confess to himself that a more genial smile had never greeted him.

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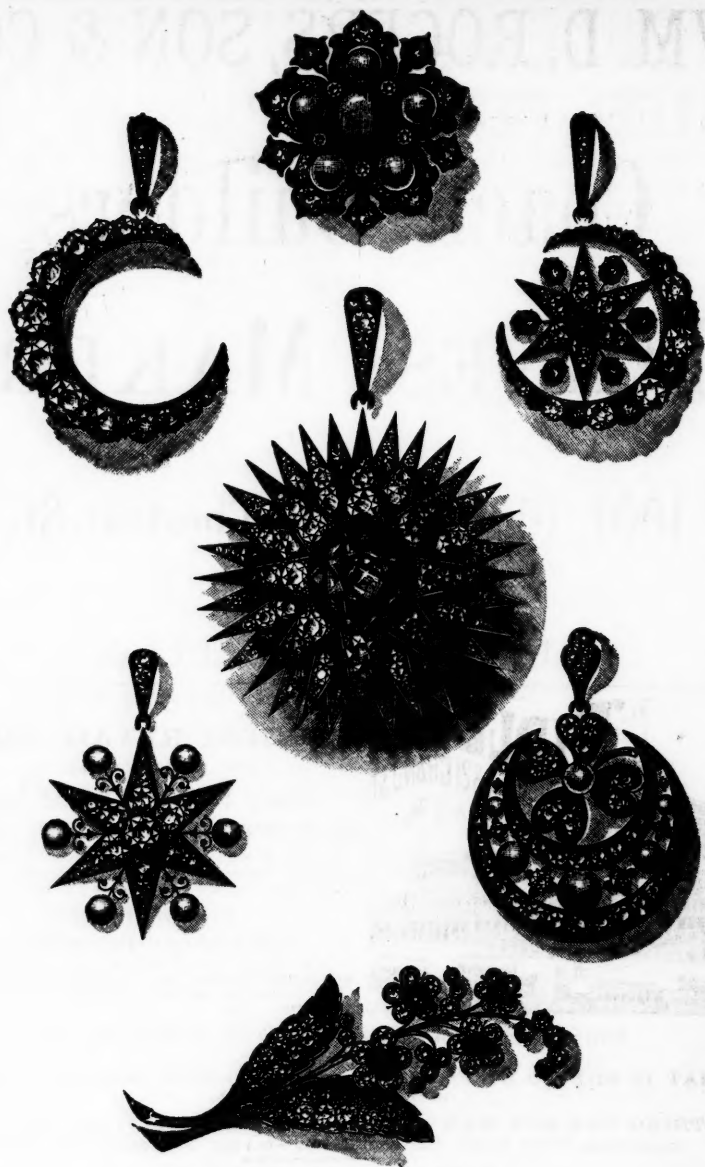
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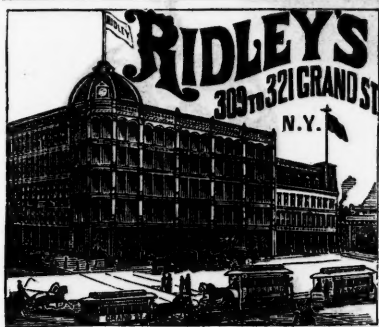
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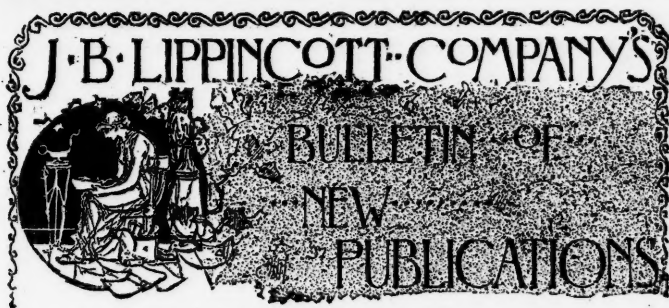
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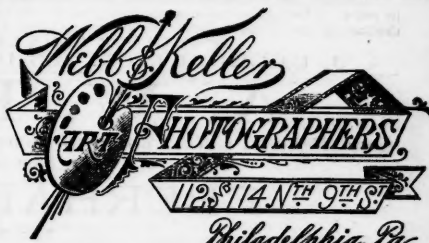


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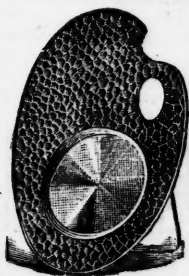
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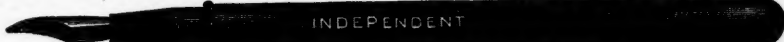
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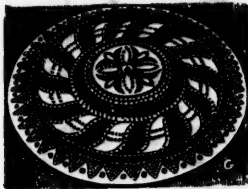
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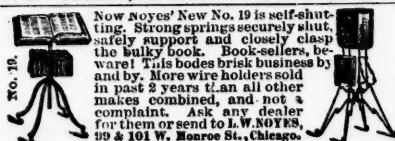
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KENYON'S WIFE.

BY
LUCY C. LILLIE,
AUTHOR OF "PRUDENCE," ETC., ETC.

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KENYON'S WIFE.



CHAPTER I.

"SHE is very young, I don't deny; but still Loretta's always had a deal of good sense."

Mrs. Lyons spoke slowly, as was her wont even when deeply interested, but her eyes were fixed upon the doctor's face with anxious scrutiny. Perhaps she expected him to argue the point with her. But he had no intention of the kind. Although he had opened the subject, his thoughts had already strayed away to another branch than the one under discussion. Loretta's age, her good sense, her probable capability as Kenyon's wife,—these points were not the questions disturbing the good man who had known Loretta from her infancy. He was thinking of the girl's personal happiness; and the proud sweetness of her glance when he had questioned it a few hours ago seemed to rise to his vision, defying his vague, unformulated fears. Meanwhile, Mrs. Lyons was going on placidly:

"I was married myself at nineteen, and Loretta's nearly twenty-one; and then she's known Kenyon off and on all her life. That ought to make a difference."

"Yes," the doctor assented, rather absently, "that makes a difference, certainly. But Loretta is so different from all other girls. She's twenty-one in some ways and about six in others."

"Oh," exclaimed Mrs. Lyons, "Loretta has *spirit* enough! She's grown to discretion, I should say, and has character enough for half a dozen Fenn girls."

The doctor smiled: "Yes, Loretta may be young in some ways, but she has a woman's heart and a woman's soul."

Dr. Maynard was considered on the Fenn Islands to have what was called a "gift" of speech, and Mrs. Lyons accepted this remark just as she accepted many of the ambiguous things he often said, but without considering its application to her niece. She felt a little disturbed, however, and looked out at the tremulous gray sea below the cottage with a silent indecision for an instant, then brought her eyes back bravely to the doctor. "I hope," she said, with determination, "you feel sure she is a *Christian*, anyway?"

"Yes. And I think Kenyon is, or *means* to be."

Mrs. Lyons moved forward suddenly with a little anxious gesture of her wrinkled hands. Kenyon Blake had travelled over leagues of the earth's surface of which the gentle widow and her niece Loretta Gardiner knew nothing, but Mrs. Lyons would at any time have declared herself sure of his orthodoxy according to Fenn standards. But Dr.

Maynard's tone of voice seemed to imply a sort of doubt of Blake's creed.

"*Means to be!*" she echoed, a little dubiously, and watched the doctor's finely-cut profile defined against the window. A queer twitching about the corners of his mouth was evident before he said, in a reassuring tone, and bringing the kindliness of his glance around to Mrs. Lyons's face again,—

"*Means to be.* Yes, Mrs. Lyons: I think that rather describes what you may call Kenyon's attitude on various subjects. Perhaps it is as much as can be said of any of us."

"Well, I do' know," said Mrs. Lyons, promptly. "I never held with those who put *maybes* for *musts*. There's both kinds; and we ought to know where they belong."

Dr. Maynard laughed outright as he rose to leave, and the widow smiled in a sort of triumph.

"But *you* know that as well as me," she said, half apologetically. "See here. Now, there's Loretta,—quiet, reserved sort of girl, but she knows where to find her principles every time she needs them. You never need be afraid of *her* not knowing a shall from a shan't or a can from a can't."

"Never," said the doctor.

"Now, what's the use of your going?" Mrs. Lyons said, suddenly, insistent in her hospitality, after the fashion of The Fenns; and, following out the customary method, she argued with him that, even if a mist *was* rising, he could always have the lantern, and supper would be ready as well here as at his own house. But he continued his adieus, and was presently walking down the road towards his own quiet fireside.

Mrs. Lyons stood a moment in the door-way, watching the old man's figure disappear around the only turn in the main road of the island. A strange pang of loneliness shot across her heart as she closed the door-way and confronted the solitude of her sitting-room, conscious that in a few weeks at furthest there would be no girlish presence to break it and give it the charm of youth and of what she began now to appreciate as Loretta's own personality. She could not think of any possible reason for objecting to a marriage which in the eyes of the island people actually had an element of worldly splendor. For thirty years her own life had known no higher exhilaration than an occasional trip to "The Main," as Fielding's Point six miles across from The Fenn was designated, and there had been few causes for emotion or surprise: so that no undue elation had tempered her feelings when ten days ago Loretta, returning from a long walk with Kenyon Blake, had announced the fact of her engagement. Indeed, the young man himself had been almost irritated by the quiet acceptance of his future by Loretta, and for her by her aunt; but there had been an unreasonable ache in the good woman's heart ever since,—an exasperating desire to find some reason for complaint which Loretta's joyous content in the whole affair pricked unconsciously twenty times a day. Mrs. Lyons seated herself in her rocking-chair again, picking up the mat she had been braiding when Dr. Maynard appeared, going on with her

work, a little line of irritation deepening between her brows while she realized, in no analytical way, but with the power of conclusion many commonplace women have, that *she* would lose what Kenyon Blake might not care to win, or, it might be, to develop, in the companionship of his wife. The quiet and increasing darkness seemed prophetic. How many afternoons, the widow asked herself, would she be likely to spend in this very room with nothing but the shadows for company? And why had she not taken "more good" out of the girl when she really *had* her? Loretta's presence was generally a quiet one, and yet somehow it pervaded the house in a fashion her aunt loved. She was not particularly rapid in her speech, yet her voice had a clear childlike ring almost of gaiety in it at times. She was lithe in her movements, her ways were deft, and anywhere but on The Fenns, where she had been known from infancy, the peculiar charm of her face, the poise of her head, and the fine walk of the girl, even, would have been known as beautiful. Something of all this had reached Kenyon Blake's inner consciousness, perhaps stirring him to the decision whose rapidity and its consequences looked startling to himself; but at this very moment, while Mrs. Lyons in the twilight was counting up every trick of gesture, every charm of voice or smile or word of her child which it seemed to her were suddenly of value, Kenyon, in a boat making slowly for The Fenns, was saying, lazily,—

"Handsome? Well, perhaps she is. She has the advantage, you see, of a fine physique, which few Fenn girls possess, and a healthy color, though she seldom has much in the cheeks. You'll see her, however, in a few minutes and judge for yourself."

Kenyon's companion, who had been treated during the last few days to a great many indifferent speeches about Miss Gardiner, smiled grimly.

"Do you expect to find her standing out on a boulder, for instance, straining her eyes for the first glimpse of yourself?" he replied.

Kenyon laughed, pushing his hat back a little carelessly, and revealing by the gesture the real beauty of his face,—the broad imaginative brow, with its outline of short waving dark hair, the eyes dark, often sombre, but when the glasses were removed, as at this moment, shown to be capable of an infinite sweetness of expression. The rest of the face was too rugged, perhaps, to be called handsome; and yet the man himself had an invincible sort of assertion about even his quiet moods which defied criticism of any kind so successfully that to remember any irregularity of feature, for instance, seemed absurd, and the easy muscular and sinewy frame was what made him always goodly to look at. There seemed not an atom of superfluous flesh on the tall, well-balanced young figure; yet he could not be called slight; every bit of muscle and nerve told, and whereas his companion, Angus Loring, presented a physique of somewhat more athletic attributes, no one could have questioned that Blake was the stronger of the two.

"She is sure to be watching for the boat," Blake said, presently. "Here we are, old boy. Take a good look at these islands, and remember I am sole lord and master of Little Fenn,—sterile hill-side, tumble-down house, and all."

The faint mist which had been for half an hour gathering about the craggy shore just below Mrs. Lyons's cottage seemed now to be drifting away, and as the two young men left the boat there was revealed to Loring's view an uncertain building which presently defined itself as a shingled school-house; above this a steep bank, along which lay the main road, and at irregular intervals the few houses of which this side of the island could boast, built evidently only because the locality had at one point or another some inducement to offer that had nothing whatever of the sentimental or picturesque in it, and, after perhaps twenty years or more of hard usage from wind and weather, long dreary winters and lazy summers, they presented a comfortable appearance of solidity, stone and framework combining cheerfully. But of individuality there was almost none. So far as Loring could see in this first misty view of things, the dwelling-houses might have grown out of the materials of the earth, with no suggestion of personality in design or idea beyond solid walls and carefully-protected windows. Away farther down than the visitor could see at that moment, a bridge spanning a really picturesque sort of inlet or bay saved from absolute cruelty the rocky hill-side dominated by a white frame church whose walls and uncompromising steeple bore the marks of time with a gaunt kind of forbearance. Beyond, a little farther still, the road seemed to end abruptly in a huge wharf, which the boat-builders of long ago had deserted, but which contained the one store of the place, situated in a building erected to hold huge masses of timber, and whose rafters echoed queerly enough to the modest demands made by the children of the island for such small confectioneries as they could purchase and at once consume.

The charm of the place, however, lay not in any accidents of architecture or coldness of native feeling where outlines and rocks were concerned. Something at once pastoral and yet sage there was about the careless-seeming island,—something secure of its own purpose, and yet with no need or desire for tradition. To call the ways or ideas of the people to account in any way would have seemed far more intrusive than any one had ever tried to be, and to object to their indifference to agriculture would have been to acknowledge one's own inability to believe in the honest simplicity of minds which preferred green pastures and undisturbed woodlands to cart-tracks and marketable clearings. And, however remote to the Philistine intruder all this might seem, Fenn people certainly understood themselves and one another, and, never having been known to ask advice, it was to be presumed they did not need it.

"Well, what do you think of it all, Loring?" Kenyon said, suddenly, putting his hand on the other's shoulder. "Queer little spot, isn't it?—but well worth your spending a few weeks on it. After the first four days a delightful sense of nearness to Ruskin will come on you; Communism will appear practicable; and, best of all, you'll have to admit that the civilization of Paris or London does not approach the instinctive refinement of these people."

"Your uncle came here to live just in a sort of freak, didn't you tell me?"

They were pushing their way up the cliff. Blake nodded.

"Yes,—across at Little Fenn; and somehow I think he got it into his dear old head that he really belonged to The Fenns. He lived quite apart, you know, and yet he always thoroughly understood the people. It was he that insisted, when Loretta's father died, that she should come down here to live with Mrs. Lyons."

"Then she was not born here?"

"No: we are both intruders.—Halloo! what's this?"

There was a jerk backward. Kenyon's tone took on suddenly the ring of impatience many regarded with him as so bad-tempered, but in an instant there was another change. He had picked up and set on a pair of sturdy legs a little child who had apparently slipped from the ledge of rock where she had been sitting with two other figures, whom for a moment the mists held concealed, but Blake said quickly, and looking upward,—

"Why, is it you, Loretta?"

And there came an answer from a very sweet voice with a sort of contralto cadence in it,—

"Kenyon, we were here watching for the boat,—and—little Lena Bartlett it is—was stooping down, and slipped off, you see."

Loretta laughed, very softly, but Loring thought her voice sweet as a thrush.

Kenyon had stretched up his hands, and two girlish ones were quickly placed within them. Then in the twilight was gradually revealed a face which suddenly brought back to Loring a picture painted and hung years ago in Paris. A man named Legros had done it, and the model was the only genuine Andalusian girl he had ever seen in a French studio. The tints of this face, half held, half revealed among the mists, were of clear ivory-white; the lips, at once proud and sweet in curve, had the purity of a child about them, the strength of a woman; and the gray eyes that were looking straight at Kenyon contained a suggestion of many things in the wide unknown world they had never seen, and yet, if need be, would meet bravely. Under a sort of scarlet cap the dusky masses of the girl's hair showed with little flecks of light, small waves clinging to her brow, or loosely moved back by the child's hands that had a moment since been clasped about her waist.

Loring knew well enough that there was nothing especially romantic about this wooing, and it had puzzled him for a week to understand why or how it had come about; but his perplexity was only deepened by seeing Loretta, and a moment later, when the two men had sprung up on the rock and Loring was walking along by the side of this tall, grave-eyed girl, he could think of little but the fascination of her voice, and the way she held herself, now and again turning her eyes towards him, smiling, or listening with a peculiarly sweet and simple manner.

Blake had been captured by the children, Loretta explained: she had promised they should be safely conducted home after the spectacle of Kenyon's arrival, and so the quartette sauntered along the misty road, across which came presently a stream of light from a wide-open door at which the children made a plunge, trying to drag Loretta and Kenyon, and even the stranger, in with them. What seemed the whole interior of the cottage was revealed, and Loring, politely lingering in

the rear of the party, was struck by the exquisite cleanliness, the brilliancy of coloring in carpets and chairs, and the very unaffected manner with which both the man and the woman of the house invited them in and congratulated Kenyon on his return.

"I should call it *polish* in Washington, you know," he said a few moments later to Kenyon, when the two men were for a moment left alone in Mrs. Lyons's sitting-room.

Kenyon had grown absent-minded suddenly.

"Yes, I suppose so," he said, and added, irrelevantly, "I'll have to talk very soon to Loretta about my work. I must tell her the place I'm trying for."

Loring was startled to find that this question had taken on an entirely new aspect to him since he and Blake had discussed it two hours ago. How shadowy Loretta Gardiner had seemed to him then!—how unlikely that she could or would have any views on the subject! But now——! He shifted about, and walked over to the window with an altered manner.

"Why, so you must, of course," he said. But when Kenyon gave an impatient gesture of inquiry, he only added, "By George!"

CHAPTER II.

BLAKE made their visit to Mrs. Lyons's cottage very short; but he explained that Phoebe Sparks, the old woman who kept house for him at Little Fenn, would be looking for them for supper, and they would come back later and perhaps show Loring what a fine thing it was to row in moonlight nights at Fenn. Kenyon's mood had not been particularly cheerful all day, but it relapsed into something almost despondent when he and his friend started in the boat to cross over to the smaller island, which seemed by night to Loring to consist of one hill only, with a large, rather weather-beaten, though finely-proportioned old house on its summit.

"It has always seemed to me," Kenyon remarked, suddenly, "the queerest thing that my uncle—a brilliant man in his day—should have chosen this place to seclude himself in——"

"Queer to seclude himself?" said Loring from the darkness. "Disappointment in love, perhaps. See here! there *was* something! I remember hearing the story."

"Oh, rubbish, Loring!" Kenyon exclaimed, with sudden energy. "I verily believe that the world thinks there can be but the one sentiment in a man to influence him to any of the serious acts of his life! Women do us so much good and so much harm we end by laying everything at their doors!"

There was a brief silence.

Kenyon continued in a duller voice: "My aunt Rachel, you know of course, was his older sister. It was so strange to go from him to her."

"From The Fenns to Mrs. Dolliver's! I should think so. Yet I shouldn't be surprised if you liked it here the best."

"The old man fascinated me the most,—probably because of his impenetrable reserve. He never really was frank and fluent, I may say, except on one subject."

"Which was——?"

"My marrying Miss Gardiner. Last year it became a sort of hobby of his."

"Oh, then, *he* urged it?" said Loring, promptly.

"Here we are," remarked Kenyon. "I can't tell how I feel about The Fenns,—they have always seemed so much a part of my life, and yet so outside of it too! Remember our discussing it in Paris? The contrasts my existence presents have been an endless source of amusement to me, but I verily believe my torment consists in a certain fascination every phase has for me."

Something which Loring was about to say would have led the subject on much further, but that their boat had reached its destination, and Kenyon turned in the darkness to hold out his hand and bid his friend a welcome.

"This is my own, my very own shore," he said, laughing. "I ought to have inherited my uncle's love of an exclusive possession. However, come on and see what you think of it all."

There was a tall youth swinging a lantern, who preceded them in an uneasy silence up the rather poorly kept walk to the garden, whence some loose stone steps led to the short terrace and the entrance of the house itself. Delightful possibilities connected with the old house flashed through Loring's mind as he followed Blake into the wide hallway and caught sight of wainscot, deep fireplaces, and spacious low-ceiled rooms. Indeed, much might have been done years ago with the house had Phoebe Sparks understood how to develop what were certainly artistic tendencies or cravings within her; but these were cherished in secret, and the tall, gaunt-looking old woman who received her master and his friend gave no hint of anything that was latent in her soul. Perhaps she had expressed it best when on the occasion of receiving some scarlet and yellow mats for her old master's bedroom she had rushed up into the attic to conceal them at once and forever.

Loring lingered awhile after a comfortable supper to talk to the old woman, who freely expressed her joy at the wedding; and Blake, declaring he had letters which must be written, went up to the room which had served him since his boyhood during his long although irregular visits to The Fenns.

He carried a lamp in his hand, and, setting it down mechanically on the chimney-piece, stood near by in silence a moment, and then went over to his secretary, where in an absent-minded fashion he began to turn over some of the papers which were in its side-drawers. But presently he let them fall, and sat with his elbows hard upon the open part of the desk, his head resting on his hands. The strangest thing in all the world seemed to the young man at that moment that he was actually engaged to Loretta Gardiner; and at the same time there seemed to him a desperate feeling of the fitness in it! Just how the last decision had come about he could scarcely say. It was only ten days since their promises were made, and yet Kenyon had allowed him-

self to have spasms of reminiscence, of self-torture, of what he called disenchantment, and of what he felt sure was an inherent fickleness in himself, which might prove permanent discontent. Yet were time to slip backward,—were he once more to be walking through The Fenn woods with Loretta, as had happened a few days after his uncle's funeral,—were the influences of those last hours with the old man to be again upon him, would he not act precisely as he had done? And if so? Kenyon almost groaned aloud. Could the speculations of Teufelsdröckh be more maddening!—the plausibility of Mephisto more bewildering! It was himself,—himself,—himself always in these analytical hours that he doubted! Oh for one brief respite of faith in what a woman's love could be, and of trust in her understanding this queer complex nature of his! But scepticism forced its way in between the currents of his desire to see the best outlook for both Loretta and himself; and the almost divine radiance of the girl's eyes as she stood by him that day in the woods, the boughs held back for her to walk beneath, yet her very step reluctant to move from him,—even this seemed to rise to mind only to torture him. It brought a sense that he had yielded to its influence from a motive too foolishly imaginary to have Loretta ever understand. The mere fact that he had taken one instant's joy out of the feeling that his arms had been about her, his lips for once laid upon hers, seemed to him to set them apart forever,—theories of his own, justice, honor, of what he felt to be the only fitting reason for one man and one woman to join their lives together, standing between Loretta and himself with the drear solemnity that some figures graven in the silence of Egyptian stone might have, warning, prophetic,—nay, when the careless *cui bono* rose within him, mocking him for his unreasoning folly. What was or ought to be this pale distant girl to him, this creature of fair lips and eyes, of tender meaningless little ways? Always a child,—never a woman. And what fiend was it that had whispered that she was wholly and despairingly in love with him? What resistless fate had brought him to the belief that by sacrificing every feeling to a sense of duty he could answer for a wrong which had been done years and years gone by? To Blake in the last ten days had come hours in which every ambition or fancy of his life, all the vacillations which had in passing been to him only picturesque, seemed to rise and bid him try his fate, to wander out into the ideal world he had meant to create, conscious that if not an impostor he had now made himself an outcast. And yet, in a maddening fashion, the very sound of Loretta's voice seemed to come over to him, waking the feeling that he tried to say must have been within the "chambers of his heart" for years, stirring it to what—if she but understood him, if he dared to hope she did or *could*—he told himself would develop into the most exalted love.

Kenyon lifted his head with a sort of savage despair over his own inability to solve these questions. After all, was he not simply doing his duty? But even as he again used the word to himself there rose involuntarily to his mind a by-gone scene, one of many which, however securely fastened into the past, in sacred niches, could with torturing distinctness arise at any moment and stand unveiled. On such an occa-

sion Kenyon recalled discussing with a chosen Mentor this fine question of actual duty in the problems of a man's life, and the conclusions then had been such as belong to immature theorists who see the heroic only in renunciation. Yet had she not said—that girl whose quiet face and reposeful charm seemed so entirely womanly to him—that her idea of Duty also seemed to be a striking fearlessly in the direction of what could combine discipline with our best kind of power? Vaguely, much as one might see, long after waking, the phantasmagoria of some vivid dream, Blake seemed to recall the words of that moment, the influences of the hour, and, strive as he might, he could not wholly shake off the sickening sort of regret which such retrospect produced.

He turned at last to a sheet of paper on which a letter was begun, and wrote on, with a feverish kind of haste: "I must tell you that I have asked Loretta Gardiner to be my wife,—that we are to be married in August if I have to go off to Germany for the *Albion*—if the Russian appointment comes. It is hard to say what I can do; but I shall know something definite shortly. I am doing my duty, I feel sure, and she will not—need not—know I have no heart to offer her. What can I say about my frame of mind? I know that you wish me—us—well, and that I am to marry one of the sweetest, gentlest creatures God ever made.

"Be as prudent and oracular as you like,—as judicious and severe. Only write. K. B."

He folded the letter, addressed and sealed it, and went out of the house like one in a dream, down the craggy path to the little wharf, where he stood a moment scanning the misty stretch of water with well-accustomed eyes. Presently Thompson's boat, which had brought him over from the Main, and the figure of that ancient mariner, were revealed,—dark, ponderous objects.

"Going over to the Main by any chance Sunday morning?" Kenyon called out, waving an energetic arm.

"Ye—es," was the slowly-uttered answer. "Hev to break the Sabbath for something over there."

"Then mail this, will you, Thompson?" Blake said, tossing him the letter.

Thompson looked the letter all over carefully, and then put it into his pocket, addressing a fervent remark to his sails.

Blake stood a moment and watched him veer about, slowly becoming absorbed in the thin mist.

When the last outline of the dingy sail was obscured, Kenyon laughed bitterly.

"It's the way to end it, I suppose," he thought; "and yet the friendship may be real,—one of the things in life, as she would herself say, which might now become tangible in form and according to her sense of the fitness of things."

But it was with rather an affected jocularly that he greeted Loring, who was smoking his pipe contentedly upon the porch.

"Are you trying to wake up the romance of the island?" Kenyon inquired, with very barefaced satire.

Loring shook his head. "Come," he answered, "it's about time

that we rowed across for the ladies, isn't it? Miss Sparks, with whom I have been making acquaintance, seems very anxious that they should come."

CHAPTER III.

LORING was rather glad that the next day was Sunday. He believed that the Islands would present something unusually interesting on such a day,—something peculiarly characteristic. It was a soft, warm day, with breeze enough, however, to let the two men sail about awhile before crossing to Old Fenn, and Loring had time to take in a view of the island, with its irregular shore, its half-cultivated uplands, and such elements of village life as he had seen the evening previous in the mist.

Mrs. Lyons and her niece were waiting for them at the little gate of the cottage, and, naturally enough, Loring walked with the elder lady down the main road above the beach.

"What sect does this church belong to?" Loring asked, politely.

Mrs. Lyons answered slowly, but with perfect simplicity.

"Well, it's kind of Methodist," she said, looking straight at the young man. "I mean, ever since Mr. Johnson came here. Before he came, for more'n two summers we were more like Unitarians, I should say."

Loretta, who was just behind them, never knew why Loring looked for a moment as if he wanted very much to laugh aloud. There was something so young and innocently happy about the girl, she seemed always in her quiet way so ready to answer to any smile with a little responsive gleam of mirth in her eyes, that Loring could not help glancing at her, after her aunt had spoken.

"What is the matter?" she asked him, confidentially. It drifted them apart, Mrs. Lyons joining some elderly friends, and Loretta walking between Kenyon and Loring.

"Oh, I was just thinking," answered Loring, "of the state of mind in any religious community which took on its sect with its season, as it were."

"My dear fellow," exclaimed Kenyon, who had been striding along looking at the familiar objects about him with less melancholy than heretofore in his eyes, "we are the most primitive people in one way, since we are the very starting-point, as it were, of Christian doctrine. We never analyze; but we have the most absolutely unformed soul-surface to be worked upon."

"And is this Mr. Johnson doing it?" Loring inquired, still much amused.

"Johnson?" echoed Kenyon. "Not he! At least, not in the way you mean it. He is a young man of really very fine mind, and he belongs to Fenn in a certain way, so you see he understands precisely what is required of him. I think if you went *among* the people here you would be chiefly impressed by two things,—their complete morality, with no especial reason for the same, and their incapacity for belief in

the doctrines of a future,—abstract comparison, isn't it? but it's only to indicate their kind of *mind*. They take their religion not at all as means to an end, but as a conventional Sunday part of the week. You have no idea how entirely unsymbolical it all is."

"But I understand——" Loring was beginning, when he broke off suddenly to say, "By the way, didn't you tell Margaret Chetwynde something of all this sort of thing that never-to-be-forgotten day at Dulwich?"

Loretta, who was listening very carefully to everything that was said between the two friends, had time to observe that several Fenn people were trooping out of their different gate-ways, that Sammy Hexam's face was unusually radiant, and that the new school-teacher was by his side, before Kenyon answered, in a queer sort of voice,—

"Yes; I believe I did."

"I fancy," said Loring, who had a very pleasant manner, "that you and she talked about nearly everything."

A long time afterwards this morning returned to Loretta's mind, bringing with it in distinct memories every element which it included. Sammy Hexam's broadly prosperous expression, the school-teacher's fluttering ribbons, came back as vividly as did every line of the two figures walking beside her, and she could look back and almost *see* herself: the Loretta of those days, a tall, quiet-looking girl, waiting on the very inflection of the voices near her, Kenyon's rather spare sunburned profile, Loring's good-looking young face, his light laugh, his kindly eye, all became indelibly part of her association with that morning, which for many reasons seemed to the girl later the starting-point from which her life began.

Kenyon broke in upon the silence suddenly.

"Here is Mr. Johnson coming down to meet us," he said, in a low tone, while Loretta smiled joyfully, holding her hand out to the minister. He was a rather young man, indefinite as to coloring or feature, but evidently desirous to be eager or up and doing, although it was well known that he never disturbed certain precedents of The Fenns. It was quite an occasion for him, this meeting of the two men from Boston, one of whom was his parishioner's lover.

"I was watching for you all," he said, when the introductions were over and Mr. Loring had explained that his coming to The Fenns was in response to an oft-repeated invitation from Kenyon Blake. The minister listened with a very pleasant manner, although it presently became absent-minded. A little later Loring observed that a great many people on The Fenns had this air of preoccupation, although it never seemed to be merely the result of reticence or a misunderstanding of what was said. Once he told Loretta that their eyes had the look of those who were always gazing upon a sailless sea, and she said perhaps that was just it: now she came to *think* of it, she could remember that *was* just their look. Loring began to observe likewise, as they walked up to the church, the difference between Loretta and the other people who were slowly forming a congregation. It was slight, but subtle,—indeed, but little more than a hint of what it might very readily become. Loring was beginning to be definitely pleased with

the girl, and, looking at her young figure, with its curves, her half-repressed manner, and her entire unconsciousness of any grace or beauty, he thought again of the study the man in Paris named Legros had made years since for the "Child Psyche." The other men in their set had condemned the picture, saying the model looked like an inexperienced country-girl; but five years later, having met unexpectedly the girl who had posed to Legros, he felt that the painter's instinct had been keener and finer than that of the men about him, in this instance at least.

As they sat in church ten minutes later, Loring, continuing to think of the Psyche, looked at Miss Gardiner seated at the end of the pew, her head slightly uplifted, a certain still look about her mouth and eyes. No doubt the young man from Boston told himself there was a meagreness of outline, a lack of finish, as it were, no special consciousness of any *right to be*; but while she raised her face and parted her lips to join in the first hymn the choir in a high loft above them and back of a fluttering green curtain took it up readily. Loring wondered when and where and how the *soul* of this girl might be awakened. What would it be to her if fright and dismay came with that awakening,—if her gaze turned outward upon the world as seen from that new point of view fell inward to break her woman's heart? But the tragic could hardly be connected with this childish young creature, and Loring, looking around at the slim congregation, the few young people and many older ones, decided that it was a queer venture certainly on Blake's part to take Loretta away from the spot, although it would be her fate to drift into the perfectly unanimated middle age, the decreasing physical well-being, the narrow existence, of the well-bred and kindly-hearted women he saw about her. But there was no use in analyzing or trying to settle this whole affair of Kenyon Blake's. Loring and Blake had been fast friends when Blake was striding far ahead of Loring at Harvard, and they had continued such in rambles abroad and more recent meetings in Boston. There Loring's aunt, who knew everybody, was a second-cousin of Kenyon Blake's, and at her house they were continually meeting. Meanwhile, other haunts of their artist and literary life brought them together.

Of Loretta Gardiner Loring had heard Kenyon speak so often and with so little emotion that when, ten days before, he had burst into Loring's studio announcing in an off-hand way the fact of his engagement, it was more like some ridiculous surprise than anything in real life, for Blake was known or thought among his set to be the last man who would ever marry. He was certainly not one who cared an atom for the smiles or beguiling ways of the many women in society who admired him. Could this one, or that, or the other, thought Loring, see him now! Constance Hazlethorp, for example, young Mrs. Maydew, or the Carey girls! And that he gave no reason whatever for his engagement, and certainly treated Loretta as little like a lover as possible, seemed like a climax of mystery in which this whole affair was clouded! Loring knew Miss Gardiner to have been the daughter of one of the oldest friends of Kenyon's father, and that she had been brought down to Greater Fenn Island when a mere child to be educated there by her

aunt, Mrs. Lyons. There was no further background, no hint or tradition of romance, connected with the girl,—nothing but the look and manner of Loretta to make her worthy of a moment's consideration in the life of such a man as Loring's friend. Yet, after years of a social life which would have set him apart from any mere piece of Arcadian folly, he had pronounced himself engaged to her!

The choir droned on, sometimes singing in tune, and generally so far out that Loretta's sweet contralto notes were like a distinct melody of her own. They sang "Paradise," Loring afterwards remembered, recalling the apathy on nearly every one of the good-humored faces. Most of the people, although plaintive in tone, were singing but the words. Yet he turned his eyes,—caught by the intensity in Loretta's voice. The depth of sweetness, the hope, the very mystery of those joyous delights beyond, seemed to have stirred Loretta into something emotional in her singing. Her face had grown very pale, and there was certainly something shining in her blue-gray eyes as she ceased.

When they came out of church and the young men had partaken of a joyless little feast, Dr. Maynard's gaunt figure suddenly appeared in the door-way, the doctor suggesting that they should walk across the island and show Mr. Loring some views from the other side.

Kenyon was well aware, as they started out, that the doctor scrutinized him keenly, and this lent a certain exhilaration to his tone and manner. He declared, laughingly, that he and the doctor should lead the way, leaving Loretta to discuss questions of Sunday-school matters with Loring just in their wake. But the pebbly shore reached through a walk in the woodlands found the party rather widely separated. Loring had been thinking of too many things to know whether he cared for the view or not, and it was certain from what he caught of Kenyon's last sentences to the doctor that the subject of their discussion had not been nature, for Kenyon was saying, in decided tones,—

"I telegraphed to know if the place is open. If it were, I'd go myself to Turkey on the spot."

It occurred to Loring that this was scarcely the kind of conversation to put Loretta at her ease, and she had distinctly told him that she was anxious for a talk with him. Kenyon and the doctor paced slowly back and forth, while now there came a sound like Loretta's name from the older man, and the words "as my wife" from Kenyon. The other two, Loretta apparently unconscious of it, sat down upon the shingle fronting an expanse of water where the lobster-nets were swaying softly near the curve in Little Island, divinely colored with rich greens, a tangle of wild flowers, and the first pale rays of the sunset, which seemed to be preparing to drift across to their very feet,—lines of mystical, sea-touched light. But Loretta, looking at none of these objects, said, lifting her eyes to her companion's eagerly,—

"Mr. Loring, I am so glad of a chance to talk to you! I think there are so many things about Kenyon you could tell me. In your conversation last night, for instance, I listened to every word; and—do you know?—I could hardly understand it at all."

CHAPTER IV.

THERE are a certain class of men to whom it seems natural to look for sympathy in the minor or greater emergencies of life, and towards whom one instinctively carries a heart overburdened by its woe or a conscience seeking a certain balance; and Angus Loring, much to his own disgust, had found himself one of these. It may be that it had increased his own self-repression or reticence, but certainly against his will he had developed a faculty of comprehension and sympathy which was always delicate enough, never obtrusive, and generally agreeable to his companions. But what on earth should he say to this girl?

"I was afraid," he ventured, "that Kenyon and I made it rather slow for you and Mrs. Lyons last night."

"Not at all." Loretta spoke quickly, but with some embarrassment of manner. "Not at all! Do you mind telling me more of all those things? I remember, for instance, your speaking of a place you called—Clichy: was that it?"

"Oh, yes." Loring laughed, and tossed a pebble far out into the water. "Oh, yes, you would like to know of that street. You see, it was a street,—the Boulevard Clichy. A lot of us fellows lived about there. Some of the men were artists; others were studying one thing or another. There was a man from Boston, named MacWilson, and old Whewell, and Dickson, and Legros,—and Blake and myself. Well, you see, as we were saying last night, it was all very delightful. You see, we were perfectly untrammelled,—came and went just as we liked. Queer times, I declare. Sometimes we had a great deal of money, and sometimes none at all; and I remember that often tragedy lurked very near our farcical existences."

Loring broke off, to turn his gaze away to the sea. A curious look crept into his eyes, and the lines about his mouth deepened. He was thinking of a night at Mrs. Chetwynde's apartment in the Rue de Chevreuil. He remembered just how it all looked, and how wild Polioskowski, the Russian artist, had been about Margaret. Scobold, just from the Leipsic Conservatory, was there too. He played some Russian music gloriously, and Margaret—Heavens and earth, thought the young man, how to make Loretta now beside him understand any of it at all?

Loring brought his face around nearer to Loretta's quiet figure on the shingle, marking her composed although rather anxious expression. "Perhaps you would have thought us rather a queer set," he said, presently. "Not a man among us had any special responsibilities. Blake was our dominating influence. I don't know that he did things better than we did, but he had a way, for instance, of suddenly pointing conclusions when we thought he had not listened to a word we had been saying. I can hardly tell you how or why, but, somehow, his opinion was of the first importance." Loring was evidently trying his best to tell the story so that she should understand it; but how could he bring to her ears the echoes of that merry Paris of theirs, or present to her mind any vision, however fleeting, of Mrs. Chetwynde's *salon*,

for example, or even the more splendid, although dreary, Embassy affairs to which they sometimes had been obliged to go? "No; we had no particular responsibilities, and the life of an art-student is a free sort of existence at any time over there. Do you know what were our days of maddest frolic and rejoicing? when some of the men painted a good thing. How we went on! I'm not *blasé* in that regard yet, but in those days our madness was all a wild exhilaration and joy. It has a sort of method now."

"But," said Loretta's girlish contralto very steadily, and she brought the deep inquiry of her eyes nearer to Loring's face, "you were not *all* artists, and you had to *study* and to *work* too. Last night it sounded like——"

Loring made haste to speak. "Oh, yes, of course we had to. Why, some of the fellows worked like the very mischief. There was Whewell. I declare, I never saw anything like the amount of work that man could get through with and enjoy life too. And Kenyon,—he stuck to it at times, I can tell you. He was hard at work over some terrible investigations in Hebrew at that time, and it was in the midst of this that he wrote such delicious poetry. You see, Paris is a limitless sort of place: one can work and play there too, if one likes. And I fancy there grows upon most men a sense when they've had enough of it."

There was no answer for a moment. Loretta sat very still, but for the movement of one of her hands among the drift-wood at her side, her eyes fixed upon the stretch of sailless water, colored brightly by the final point of Little Fenn, which they could see from this portion of the beach, and which was always first to catch the deepening of the sunset glow.

"You said last night," the girl began, and looked at her companion with a sweet glance that pleased him very much: he remarked how becoming was her sailor hat, with its straight white wing, and wished that she carried out the suggestions of a fitness of things in other parts of her costume,—"*I think* these were the words, for I tried to remember them,—you said, *This sort of thing seems colorless after it.*"

Her tone was very anxious. Her eyes seemed to be urging him to be entirely frank.

Loring felt puzzled, but decidedly interested. If there was one thing on which he especially prided himself, it was his discrimination and appreciation of the subtler traits of human character. Human nature, he was wont to declare, was his daily lesson, his ever-open book. He carried that pleasant shrewd look of his from place to place, studying the world's lesson, reading new chapters in every fresh face, every phase of character or development of life, and his only regret was that the strikingly original in human nature was so rare. In this, King Solomon certainly had the best of it. He knew precisely what he was saying when he declared, no doubt with many an inward pang, that there was nothing new under the sun. But Loring allowed himself at times slight diversions from this rigorous standard. A character so unexpected, so unsophisticated, and—if he could use the expression after listening to certain notes in her voice and catching something of the

possibilities in her face—so *toneless* as this girl's was enchanting to our modern philosopher. He looked at Loretta with genuine admiration, pleased at the very crude, undeveloped condition of her inner and outer being. The question that rose first into his mind had a special charm for him. What was her personality? Had she any individuality worth striking into life?

"Colorless?" He repeated his own word, which had seemed to him to have a different meaning on Loretta's lips. "Well, yes, I suppose in one sense. You want to know what I meant exactly? You see, life was very full, Miss Gardiner, very active: it had in it things which appealed very strongly to the highly-colored, vivid side of life. I find it hard to explain all this to you without seeming to compare it to The Fenns in a way."

"Oh, you need not mind," interrupted Loretta, quickly. "I want so much to know about it." She spoke decidedly. "I don't care so much for The Fenns. We've wanted to sell for a long time."

Loring looked at her with the most alert scrutiny.

"No," he said, slowly, "no, I don't suppose you *do* care so much. By the way, did you ever read a book of Black's called 'A Princess of Thule'?"

Loretta shook her head, but she repeated the title sedately: "'A Princess of Thule.' No. Is it a nice story?"

"Well," said Loring, "it is possibly one of the most delightful stories ever written. I was thinking, when I spoke, of the heroine, who lived on an island very much as you do, only the very difference between The Fenns and the Hebrides illustrates what I was saying. Now, this girl in the book—Sheila her name was—led a life full of so much that was picturesque and active, and, as I was saying, *strongly colored*, that outside influences were not needed to make her a real companion for her——"

Loring stopped short, hesitated a moment, furtively, painfully watchful of Loretta's unmoved face. Then, much more cheerfully, he went on:

"You understand that in all those olden countries there is a lot of background, as it were, ready to hand,—old houses, picturesque stonework, quaint customs and manners, no end of traditions that go far to make life very fascinating for a man like—Blake, for instance, with a quick imagination, which needs a sort of response, as it were, in the things about him all the time. I try to define it, and think I can, Miss Gardiner, yet suddenly my ways and means fly from me, for all I can see just where the difference is."

"But," she said, in a low tone, "Kenyon always cared more for The Fenns than I did."

Loring stood up. "Ah," he said, and complimented the girl with a very sunny smile, "you see, that was just because, coming down here from time to time, he found something which appeals to this very sort of fancifulness of his. I take it there is a side of his nature you may not have given much thought to. You have appreciated his strength, his cleverness, his fine warm heart."

The girl's face was beautiful as Loring said these words.

"Yes," she answered, "that is true; but the other part,—has that all come because of life in other places, in that Clichy street, for instance?"

Loring hesitated, turning a questioning frown towards the ocean. The figures of the old doctor and Kenyon were well defined on a rock almost beyond the curve. Loring looked at his friend as he answered Loretta.

"No; but—don't you see?—he found things there that he liked, things in other people as well as in the place. He enjoys the companionship of people who have seen, thought, felt. It developed him, and he liked it. I think I may say he best enjoys experienced people."

Loretta remained silent for some moments after this. She was turning over in her mind Loring's words, trying to extract from them some clue to Kenyon's present dissatisfaction, which she felt in some way depended upon herself. She made none of Loring's careful definitions, yet in her gentle untried heart was a passionate desire to *do*, to *be*, to supply in some fashion or at least be in sympathy with those unknown parts of Kenyon's life. Everything was too confused and vague just then for her to take much comfort in anything Loring said, yet she felt sure that he could help her.

"Experienced people," she repeated, lifting her eyes anxiously to the young man's face. "You mean people who have had some events in their lives?"

"Who have *felt* and seen and heard," said Loring, rather dreamily. Another pause; then—

"How ought a person to grow experienced?" the girl asked, slowly.

Something in her voice struck upon Loring suddenly, and as he looked around quickly he seemed to feel the very depths of her sorrowful, anxious meaning.

"Miss Gardiner," he said, in an altered tone, and dropping into his former position on the sands, "a man's life and a woman's are very different. I can't give you any better idea of what Blake needs than to say he is one who needs action, response,—let us say, *friction*. But you are to be his wife, and know twenty times better than I just what is best for him."

"No," said Loretta, very simply, "that is just it. I *don't*; but there is no reason why I shouldn't *learn*. That—that girl you spoke of in the book,—was *she* an experienced person?"

"Well, no," rejoined Loring, in a kind tone; "but, then, her husband and Blake were two different sorts of men. Sheila's story was very near being a tragic one, but the force of her womanhood triumphed. Read it, I advise you."

"And—do you know the names of any other books that I could read?"

She was still carefully regarding him, and Loring observed now for the very first time how extremely young she looked. The eyes, eager, wistful, intent as was their glance, might have belonged to a child of ten. He remembered this later, just as he often thought of the little figure in the dark-blue gown sitting in the sunlight, the dark braids of her hair uncovered, the firm little hand moving restlessly, all

the composure and gravity of her feelings evident in lips and questioning eyes.

"Any that people who you say think and feel things the right way would be likely to read?" she asked again.

"Suppose," Loring thought, "I were to classify a library for her instruction in human nature? Who was the girl in Tourgenieff's story whom a man educated in his fashion only to make wretched?"

"I can remember some good books," he said, presently. "What sort of reading do you like? What have you read?"

She slowly enumerated a very dreary set of books.

"Do you like poetry?" he asked.

"Very much," Loretta asserted.

"Do you know—oh, I suppose you don't—Rossetti or William Morris? Now, that's just the sort of thing Kenyon used to moon over, I remember." Loring laughed. "You should get him to tell you about a club we had in Paris. We were very keen in those days about a certain set of pre-Raphaelites,—they were a band of poets and artists in England,—and I remember a long debate as to the probable meaning of one of Rossetti's small poems,—a little thing about wood-spurge. Kenyon was wonderfully clever that night: you know, as a rule, he isn't brilliant,—that is, not especially epigrammatic; but he fairly shone that evening."

Loring remained thoughtfully silent for a moment. He recalled the feverish state into which Blake had worked himself that evening, their walk home through the moonlit streets, Blake's eloquent, daring talk, his declaration of a sort of radicalism the little clique affected rather too strongly, their stopping under the Chetwyndes' windows—There the reminiscence began to be very puzzling. He looked up at Loretta, and asked himself again why Blake had come down to the Islands to marry this girl.

As for Loretta, everything seemed to be in a whirl in her mind.

"Oh," she said, suddenly, and clasping her hands with a gesture as of physical pain,—*"oh, there is so much, so much to learn!"*

Loring started. "Let me help you if I can," he exclaimed, resolved once and for all to help this girl along in the problem sure to be confronting her.

CHAPTER V.

DURING the last few moments a row-boat had come in sight, making for that portion of the beach occupied by our party, and both Kenyon and his companion were speedily aware that the boy who sat within the boat had his eye fixed upon them.

"Halloo!" he shouted up. "Kenyon Blake there?"

Kenyon was down the bit of crag in an instant, and helping the boy to shove up his boat.

"Telegraph for you, sent over from the Main," said the boy, regarding Blake for the instant as the distinguished one among them. "Phoebe Sparks sent me to find you."

The others had all gathered near, but Kenyon tore the yellow en-

velope open with his back turned, and must have read and re-read the contents several times before he brought his face, with the expression it had worn wholly gone from it, back to them. He looked at Maynard.

"It's the very thing we were talking of," he said, trying to smile, but evidently laboring under some strange excitement. "The only thing is the question of time. It may be I must sail Tuesday, and yet I may have a month or two's waiting. At all events, the place is mine, if I choose to take it."

He came forward to Loretta with more of gentle deference in his manner than he had yet shown to her.

"This is the post I was expecting," he said, in a low voice,—*"the offer to go out as special war-correspondent to Russia."*

Loretta looked at him with a dumb sort of entreaty in her expression.

"Where they are—fighting?" she said, tremulously.

Kenyon laughed, but continued to have much of gentle kindliness in his manner.

"Yes, dear; but it's what I've been longing for. There are to be two others, it appears. The names are not given me, but I must go to the office to-morrow morning, ready, if necessary, to start the next day."

Every one was silent, until Loretta said,—

"You want to go, then?" and she added, "When shall you be back?"

"In a few months," he answered, absently. Something else had begun to occupy his mind. He turned to the others, speaking much more quietly than was his wont when excited.

"If you and Loring will walk on, doctor," he said, "I will take Loretta in the boat." Turning to the boy, he added, "Can you row Miss Gardiner and me back in that boat?"

The boy grinned. "Could row ye *all*," he said; but the others understood it, and it ended in Loring and the doctor's waiting.

The boat, with its three figures, faded out of view, Loretta sitting quite apart with Kenyon, who began from the very first to talk to her in low tones, but of matters which even had the boy caught the words would have been perfectly unintelligible to him.

The doctor and Loring talked a great deal about the two others as they made their way through the woods. The doctor explained that his home was in Massachusetts, and that he very rarely visited Fenn, where he had a small cottage, but that he had always known both Kenyon and Loretta.

"What do you think ought to be done about this?" Loring inquired, with much deference of tone.

"I have already thought of many ways," the older man answered, "of arranging for Loretta's happiness. I think I understand Kenyon pretty well; and it would be unwise *now* to urge him to give up this expedition. But Loretta's position is to be consulted. Perhaps you don't know," Dr. Maynard continued, turning suddenly upon the young man at his side, "how very lonely her place might be on The Fenns if—anything happened to her aunt."

However definitely the doctor had intended to elaborate this idea, there was no further time for it. Their starting-point was reached, and in the twilight of the widow's sitting-room they saw three figures, —Kenyon standing by the fireplace, Loretta near by, and Mrs. Lyons rocking anxiously; while two of the voices showed some question to be under serious discussion.

Loring and his companion entered the house, and Mrs. Lyons looked with an air of great relief upon Dr. Maynard.

"Oh, just come in, doctor," she said, in a tone of complete despondency. "Kenyon won't mind telling it all to you. I suppose you understand where he is going and what he is to do, but it seems queer to have Loretta married right straight off."

Kenyon's voice came quickly from his side of the fireplace: "Dr. Maynard, and, Loring, you too, I am sure, will understand what I wish to say. Loretta and I have talked it over thoroughly. I am going away a great distance, and I don't think I ought to leave her alone where she may be unprotected. As I have explained to you, I may have two or three months in Boston or New York, or I may not have twenty-four hours. In either case, I think, we ought to be married at once. I can leave her here with full instructions as to what to do in my absence, and she will have the great protection, in case of any harm befalling any of us, of my old aunt in Massachusetts. She will receive my wife where she might not receive the girl to whom I had only been engaged a few days."

Everybody was silent for an instant. Loring looked at Loretta, and saw that her face, white as marble, was fixed upon Kenyon's, but that no impulse of her own seemed to move it.

"I see it in exactly that light," said Dr. Maynard, solemnly.

Mrs. Lyons gave a sort of gasp.

"Oh, well, then?" she said, as though further argument were unnecessary; but she turned swiftly upon Kenyon Blake. "What do you mean to do about it?" she asked. "The minister's gone over to the Main."

"We can easily bring him back," said Dr. Maynard. "If Kenyon starts, as he says he may, by Tuesday night, there is nothing for him to do but to take a boat at daybreak to-morrow and get the early steamship. My opinion is like his. He had better marry Loretta at once, and start off to find out what further plans the *Albion* may have for him. If there are to be some months of waiting, it will be easy enough for Loretta to join him, and the whole trip, even if he sets out without an hour's warning, will be done with before winter."

Mrs. Lyons, who had been making sundry little sounds half of admiration and half of annoyance, now began to see things laid before her in fairly logical fashion. It would have seemed strange to Loring that Loretta's voice was so completely left out, but that he knew well how skilfully Kenyon had presented the case on their journey from the other shore.

"I will sail across myself," said Kenyon, decidedly. He glanced at Loretta, whose eyes, heavy as though with unshed tears, were lifted to his face. With a new discernment he understood that the hours of

waiting might be very hard if passed alone in Mrs. Lyons's company, and he added, putting his hand upon Loretta's shoulder, "Suppose Loring takes you and Mrs. Lyons across to Little Fenn: the ceremony may just as well be performed there, and you can help Phoebe Sparks to get things together, as it were."

Loretta moved and walked like one in a dream. She was conscious that from some hazy point Thompson's boat had been made ready and Dr. Maynard and Kenyon had set off in it, that Loring had rowed her aunt and herself across to Little Fenn, where the case was explained to Phoebe Sparks, and that Loring himself had kindled a wood fire on the hearth in the bare little sitting-room, while he talked quickly and lightly to Loretta and Mrs. Lyons, occupying everybody's attention with trifles which seemed to the girl of strange unimportance. She had taken off her bonnet and light jacket, and had begun in a meaningless sort of way to work with Loring, but the outward apathy was of no account at all. The girl's heart and brain were fairly whirling, and she seemed to find herself in some curious envelopment of misery that she could not understand.

The hours passed. It was scarcely ten o'clock when Phoebe Sparks, who during this time of waiting had regarded Loretta with anxious and affectionate silence, put a thin hand upon the girl's shoulder and looked at her with intense compassion in her wrinkled, honorable old face.

"Lorette," she whispered, "I hear the boat a-coming. I guess they'll be here in a minnit."

Loretta had been straining her gaze out into the night, where the moon seemed to make dense shadow as well as quivering spaces full of light, and she turned now with a startled look, as though this boat might contain her executioners. But presently Loring's voice was heard in cheerful accents, and coming up the rough steps leading to the house were Dr. Maynard, Kenyon, and the young minister.

A long time afterwards that strange scene, that queerly-consorted party, used to come back to Angus Loring's mind like something that might be legendary, so mythical did the elements which were its facts, its deepest reality, seem to him. Mrs. Lyons was hovering about, as though on such an occasion there ought to be something special for her to do and say; Phoebe Sparks was kneeling on the hearth, making a great show of activity in keeping up the fire, for the night had grown decidedly chill; Loretta stood still in the window, like a marble image; and Kenyon, scarcely less pale than she, but for some reason looking ten times finer than he had when the day began, approached her slowly.

A curious kind of deference still characterized his manner towards the girl. He certainly had seemed to feel that it was he that should decide it all,—he that should confer the favor; yet there was that in the look of the young girl before him which defied anything like condescension, although no lover who could read the message of a face rightly need to have questioned that the girl would have laid down her very life for him.

The little groups shifted about. With scarcely a word between them, Loretta and Kenyon stood before the minister, and the service

began. It might have been the queerness of it all, it might have been the isolation of their surroundings, yet Loring, standing by, one of the few spectators, could not shake off the feeling of unreality, though in Loretta's voice as each response came from her lips he understood that no oath cried aloud to heaven could have seemed more solemn than this pledge "Until death do us part" that the girl was giving.

It was over at last, and there was a relief in Mrs. Lyons's voluble talking to Mr. Johnson; and even when Phœbe Sparks made a rush into the kitchen, and it was well known that she moaned there in solitude, that was better than seeing her old face among them like some unhappy prophetess of woe. Kenyon still held Loretta's hand in his. With decided inconsistency, he wished that the girl would look at him or say something, now that she was his wife. Would that she were glad, or even demonstrative! But, as nothing came of their silence save one exquisitely tender look from underneath her half-lifted lashes, Kenyon was relieved when Mr. Johnson explained that he could row the ladies back to their house, and Mrs. Lyons, in the midst of their weeping, declared she should sit up to get a good breakfast for them by three o'clock. Of course, she continued, they'd be waiting to see them before they crossed over to the Main, while Loring said, hastily, that he and Kenyon would be over there before daylight; they had arranged with Thompson for his boat by four o'clock, and would have a good hour to spare at the widow's cottage.

Loretta walked beside her husband down to the beach, where he helped her into the little boat that was swaying back and forth in the moonlight. The girl could not quite lose her sense of preoccupation in all this, and yet she already felt that the dividing-line between her new life and the old had been made. The first dip of the oars as they went in and out of the dark water seemed an accompaniment to the words which had just been spoken, "Until death do us part."

Loretta, lightly wrapped in a shawl of fleecy wool which was the only bride-like thing about her, sat in the stern of the boat, quite unconscious of the infinite and solemn beauty of the night under which they were speeding. The waters rippled away from them shining, here and there forming into shadows that might have been cast by some fair-tinted opal. Little Fenn had its moment of transformation when they were midway across, and Loretta, turning back for some glimpse of her husband in the house upon the hill, saw the garden and orchard there bathed in a wonderful effulgence. All the mystery and charm of moonlight seemed upon them and around them; but would it always seem to her like this? Would it always seem as though the lights of her new home came from lofty and hidden places? Above them the sky was filled with stars, and to these old friends of Loretta's she lifted her face, as though telling them the story of her marriage. Kenyon would have been startled by the look upon his wife's face in these quiet moments,—might perhaps have understood something of all that had been throbbing and burning within her while she seemed to him an ice-maiden,—an image of marble, about whose very power of loving him he had suddenly become faithless. What he had expected the man could not say; but, his whole motive having been to satisfy the desire,

—nay, what was due her life,—he had found himself a moment after his marriage scornfully regretful of the whole affair. He had been mistaken, he told himself, going slowly up the stone steps again. Loretta had not really loved him. He had been disappointed once,—fooled now.

CHAPTER VI.

"MAY just as well let her have her own way," Mrs. Lyons said, a few moments after entering the cottage. "She never *was* a selfish girl, but she wants to go up to her own room now, and I guess I can get around, for everything there is to do. I expect she'll sit up there with that forlorn look of hers upon her face until they're gone away."

Mr. Johnson, who was standing in the gaudy lamp-lit little parlor, looked as though it might be a time to say some words of consolation; but Mrs. Lyons felt in too much of a hurry to listen to him, and he went away, determined, however, to be back in time to see Kenyon's party off.

Mrs. Lyons was quite right, for Loretta, after certain attempts to prove of assistance, had looked so incapable of anything like accomplishing what she undertook, that Mrs. Lyons was glad to see her going up to her own room.

An hour or so later her aunt stood in the door-way, saying that she thought she'd take a little sleep until they came over: she didn't doubt they'd make noise enough coming in, and she'd be *sure* to wake up.

Loretta was at the window, apparently gazing at the lights of Little Fenn, but she turned swiftly to beg that her aunt would lie down upon her bed and let her wake her in time.

"I shall not go to sleep, you know," she said out of the darkness; and Mrs. Lyons, whose nerves were thoroughly unstrung, suffered herself to be led by the girl and made comfortable upon the small bed on the western side of the room, where, however, she said she thought Loretta might just as well talk to her for a moment. The girl, who had always been in many ways the stronger of the two, knelt down and took her aunt's hands in both of hers.

Mrs. Lyons had closed her eyes, but she turned her head a little on the pillow nearer Loretta to say, shortly,—

"S'pose you ain't exactly *glad* to be going away from home, Loretta?"

And, though not an eyelash quivered, she was decidedly alert for the answer.

"No, no; not as you mean," Loretta said, but somehow it seemed to her it was like talking to a child, her own thoughts were so different from the words that she was saying.

"Well, even if you *do* stay only two or three months in New York or Boston, it will sort of smarten you up for the time he is away," pursued Mrs. Lyons, with closed eyelids. "But," she added, in a moment, "I *do* hope he'll come back. Although it *is* better, all things

considered, to have married you, it is, I do say, a forlorn thing for a woman to live apart from her husband."

For some reason it seemed impossible, even in the darkness, for Loretta to be able to discuss the question. There was rarely any demonstration between these two who had lived so closely together for nearly twenty years, and it was much now to them both that Loretta held her aunt's hands firmly and tenderly in her own and bent her face down to kiss them.

"I declare," said Mrs. Lyons, with a little jerk, and not lifting her lashes, perhaps lest Loretta should detect the moisture beneath them, "I believe I am getting as nervous as old Miss Hexam. I shall be sending you up 'round about afternoon to get one of her quieting powders." There was a moment's silence, and the widow added, not loosening her hands from the sweet young grasp in which they lay, "S'pose you try saying one of the hymns."

It had been an old custom with the two on Sunday evenings or windy, lonesome nights to "say the hymns,"—an occupation which had originated with Loretta in her childhood, the hymn-book being at the time all of the sublime that she knew, and accordingly the most soothing and restful of all influences.

"Perhaps it may quiet you," said Loretta, very tenderly. Her voice, though saddened, was full and clear when, recalling the service of the morning, she began, with her soft cheek on her aunt's pillow,—

"O Paradise! O Paradise!
Who doth not crave for rest?
Who would not seek the happy land
Where they that love are blest,
Where loyal hearts and true
Stand ever in the light,
All rapture through and through,
In God's most holy sight?"

She went on in the same tone, but with something deeper in its notes:

"O Paradise! O Paradise!
The world is growing old:
Who would not be at rest and free
Where love is never cold,
Where loyal hearts and true
Stand ever in the light,
All rapture through and through,
In God's most holy sight?"

"O Paradise! O Paradise!
I greatly long to see
The special place my dearest Lord
In love prepares for me,—
Where loyal hearts and true
Stand ever in the light,
All rapture through and through,
In God's most holy sight."

She had repeated the verses twice, when the regular sound of her aunt's breathing, and the loosening of the tired wrinkled hands in her

own vigorous ones, told their story. She went back to the window, pushed open the shutters, closed it in part, and then, crouching on the floor beneath, or sometimes kneeling against the sash, did not move from her vigil till daybreak.

Whatever came to Loretta during these hours she could not say, but when the morning fairly awakened, and the pulsations of its life seemed stirring all nature newly to her gaze, when through a streak of carmine in the water the boat from Little Fenn was to be seen, something like a possession of peace she had not known filled the girl with bravery to meet the long parting she knew well enough was close at hand

CHAPTER VII.

NEVER had Mrs. Lyons's volubility been so welcome; for how else the breakfast prepared could have been eaten by the party, who were all more or less impressed by a sense of tragedy about them, no one of them could say.

Loring and Dr. Maynard tried to be cheerful. Loretta's face was white as marble, but her eyes sought Kenyon's with a look of deep trustfulness and content within them. He had the business-matters to talk over with Dr. Maynard and herself, and they went into the little parlor, where the first rays of the morning light were beginning to bring out its familiar objects clearly. Dr. Maynard had but few words to say. He had witnessed Kenyon's will, had promised to see that Loretta was taken early in the autumn to visit Kenyon's cousin, Mrs. Bailey, in Boston, and to see the aunt he had spoken of at Mayridge, five miles from town. There were scarcely fifteen minutes before the boat was going, and Kenyon had said in the course of the business talk that it was better for Loretta not to attempt to sail across; the good-byes on the landing might be annoying.

Dr. Maynard had left the room. Kenyon was standing with his arm leaning on the chimney-piece, while Loretta sat in one of the windows through which the day was slowly entering. Never, never for an instant could she forget that moment,—Kenyon's face stern and grave, filled with what seemed to her misgivings, his voice in speaking as set and cold as though the matters in hand were the merest business details.

"I had meant in any case," he was saying to her, "to take you away for the winter to Boston, and to make you known better, dear, to my family; and now, you see, that you are my wife, you can go there freely, or if I should send for you to almost any part of Europe you could come. You see, this makes of you an independent woman and sets my mind at rest." He paused a moment, and added, looking straight at the quiet young figure which had risen now, and at the eyes regarding him so gravely, "You are not sorry, Loretta, I hope, and you quite understand my motives?"

What it meant to the girl chiefly was that he himself had no hope of coming back.

"How long will it be?" she said, in a low tone. "No; of course I am not sorry."

From the window she could see Thompson's boat all ready, with such luggage as the young men had brought down prominently in view. Mrs. Lyons's voice was heard in the distance: Loring and Dr. Maynard were evidently urging some point upon her.

Loretta put her hands suddenly close together, with a wild desire to say something to her husband of her misery at this parting. He came nearer and took her hands in his.

"You are a mere child, Loretta," he said, with a ring of disappointment in his voice. "But don't forget me; and try to love me; and——" He broke off, and saw that the tears were running down the girl's cheeks while he was speaking.

Mrs. Lyons was almost at the very door.

Kenyon started, desiring to comfort Loretta in what he thought her childish sense of dismay, but he could not bring himself to be demonstrative to such a perfectly unresponsive creature. She had wiped the tears hastily from her eyes, and he stooped down, kissing her very tenderly on her trembling lips.

Loretta would have given worlds to speak, but not only dumbness but a sort of strange confusion seemed to come upon her. She knew that Mrs. Lyons, Loring, and even Kenyon again spoke to her; but she pressed her hands against the window-pane and said nothing, while they walked out of the house and down through the early morning light to Thompson's Wharf.

When they had turned to wave their handkerchiefs to the figures above, and the boat had curved about Little Fenn, Loretta found Dr. Maynard at her side.

"My dear child," he was saying, very gently, "Kenyon desired me to say to you that there was little or no chance of his coming back to The Fenns until he had made the first trip,—at least until he was replaced by a man called Ranford, who has undertaken the same work with him. And it will be three months anyway, Loretta; and you must be brave. Another thing Kenyon left me to tell you: he wants you and Mrs. Lyons to go across to Little Fenn, to live there at once."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE traditions of Loretta's girlhood were fortunate on the day of her husband's departure, for it was impossible to let any question on The Fenns long take on a tragic importance, and after a brief sleep the girl woke to find herself in her own room, the mid-day sun risen, and a sensation that her new life and the old were curiously blended.

She could hear Mrs. Lyons rattling among the tins in the kitchen with familiar alacrity. While she lay still for a moment, the sounds of neighboring voices floated up to her window, and Loretta asked herself why they should seem in any way now disassociated with her life. When she was dressed, she went down as usual to the sitting-room,

where for the most part since her leaving school her occupations had lain, Mrs. Lyons persisting in the notion that there was no use whatever in two of them doing the kitchen-work at once. But over the finer part of the household labor Loretta ruled supreme, and, just as though nothing had occurred the day before to startle her life out of its ordinary calm, she began dusting the chimney-piece and setting the room to rights, but finally decided upon going out into the kitchen for the broom.

Mrs. Lyons turned suddenly from the dresser, where she was counting out plates, and before either of the two spoke they made a tacit acknowledgment of the fact that the wedding need not be talked of between them. So Mrs. Lyons said, in a very ordinary tone of voice, "You will find the broom out on the door-step," but added, as the girl went down to take it from its nail, "I should not fuss much, if I was you, with sweeping, or anything like that. You will be all tired out for your long journey to-morrow."

Loretta stood still in the sunlit door-way of the little kitchen, and, leaning her hands on either side, said, smiling almost compassionately,—

"Why, aunt, Kenyon isn't coming back until he has made that first trip. He is to write something further about our going over to the other house. But I am very sure he could not take me to New York, —just now. We must go right on as usual."

Mrs. Lyons regarded her niece for a moment in silence; then, turning to the dresser, she said, curtly, "Well, have it as you like: take your broom, I suppose." And presently the sounds of Loretta's even strokes with the broom were heard.

From the kitchen Mrs. Lyons proceeded: "If we're going to move out in a day or two, I should think we'd better be looking round us a little. Easy enough for Kenyon Blake to tell us to root up branch and twig and go over to Little Fenn, but it's going to be a piece of work, I can tell you."

It seemed queer to Loretta that a desire to be in her husband's house —in the house she ought to call her own—had possessed her during all her waking hours.

She answered, without pausing in her occupation,—

"Oh, but, Aunt Liddy, you know you have always liked the Little Fenn house and said you wished you could live in it." She stood in the door-way, having tidily collected her dust, and smiled almost brightly. "There isn't any harm in going over there; and you like Phoebe Sparks,—and everything; and as for this house, why, you have said it would be just the place for your sister Martha if you could give it right up part and parcel to her: it was only that you and she could not very comfortably make use of the same four walls."

Loretta had turned one of her aunt's recent caustic remarks to very good purpose, and the older woman was pleased to note the little tone of childlike gayety with which Loretta concluded her sentence.

"Well," she said, slowly, "I suppose if you've got to mind him last you might as well begin first." And this subject, like the other, was understood to be dismissed.

It was early the next morning that the telegram which Loretta had taught herself in every fibre to expect came. Kenyon found himself compelled to start at once, but would be away at the most only three months. Loring would be down to The Fenns in a few days with some things he wanted her to use at Little Fenn. She and Mrs. Lyons were to go there at once. Good-by.

"So those are his orders," said Mrs. Lyons when Loretta had finished reading.

"It's very long for a telegram," said the girl.

"And mighty short for a wedding-trip," returned the elder woman.

Loretta's new sense of importance really filled the good woman with satisfaction, and probably for this reason she felt bound to show as much contempt for Kenyon's way of doing things as possible. Her niece's hand now lay very gently upon her arm as she said,—

"But, aunt, I have often heard you tell that when you were married Uncle Job had to go straight off whaling."

"That was his *business*," rejoined Mrs. Lyons. "I don't see why, as Dr. Maynard—or was it Mr. Loring?—tried to say last night, this sort of war-correspondence requires a man fit to write a book. But I don't hold with the savageries that are going on there among the Turks, either. A married man ought to stay at home when he can do it."

All this kind of opposition on Mrs. Lyons's part made Loretta able to endure her own inward struggles, and she had nothing that was impertinent or intrusive or unkind to bear from the neighborhood. Every one was interested and came to see her, but their compassion was not loudly expressed, and during the reception of her friends Mrs. Lyons's whole tone changed to one of complete satisfaction with her niece's position. The fact that they should move at once into the great gaunt house of Little Fenn interested the neighbors, but did not move them to any of the officiousness which belongs to circles considered far more active and civilized. Years of culture and refinement could not have made these people more delicate in their reticence or kinder in their way of showing that silence did not preclude good will.

Once roused to the novelty of removal, Mrs. Lyons began her preparations with cheerful activity.

Mr. Loring was to be expected within a week, and she was desirous, for some reason, that he should find them settled in their new home; so the packing went forward with great celerity, and by the following Tuesday Mrs. Lyons was heard to declare that Martha Thorner and that daughter of hers could have the place all to themselves by the next day if they liked.

During this period Dr. Maynard had been a frequent visitor. Between him and Loretta there was a silence on some questions which both understood. The kind-hearted friend knew that the day would come when the girl would have much to say to him, perhaps, but it certainly was not just yet; and he could afford to wait.

It was one very quiet afternoon that Loretta Blake found herself for the first time mistress in her husband's house. Mrs. Lyons had

insisted upon her beginning her reign there in that name, though both knew that the aunt and Phoebe Sparks would rule the establishment between them. Indeed, while preparations for tea were being made in the capacious kitchen, Loretta roamed about the garden, which was full of old-fashioned blossoms, stood a long time in front of the ragged stone wall dividing it from the orchard, and wondered how long a time it would be before she would feel finally at home there.

Things must be changed very much, she knew, for Kenyon's comfort. He had always during his uncle's lifetime declared the house to be hideous, but Mr. Loring had remarked how full of possibilities it was. What were they? thought the girl, turning her face back from the western glow to look at the large, irregular building, with its weather-beaten aspect, and yet its capacity for much finer things. Well enough she knew that Loring, whose sagacity certainly was cosmopolitan, could answer all these questions satisfactorily; but she would so much have preferred to know a little of them for herself.

The three women alone in the house partook of their tea together almost in silence. Three huge packages had come down by Mr. Thompson's boat during the past two days, and were awaiting Loring's arrival at a later hour. Phoebe Sparks would have given a great deal for permission to untie those systematically-strapped cords, but as Loretta did not seem disposed to meddle with the packages—indeed, Loring's coming had meant no material advantage to her—the ancient hand-maiden and friend of the household could offer no such suggestion, and whatever her feelings on the subject, Mrs. Lyons considered she had concealed them by completely ignoring the parcels during their time of waiting in the wide, dingy hall.

It startled Loring, as he came up in the little boat, to see a girlish figure in a blue flannel gown standing on the wharf. It was almost to the young man as though he had left her there on the morning of his departure and she had merely moved from one island wharf to the other since. But her manner showed decided alacrity. For a moment as they went up the ragged steps she was silent, but presently was eager to ask and listen about her husband, his departure, etc.; and Loring, who had been plunged in misery over the whole affair since he had seen the stern lines of something like despair on his friend's face the night of his marriage, tried to answer her in the simplest fashion by handing her a letter written by her husband just as he was starting. But as she sat down at once upon the bit of wall to read it, Loring could think only of the storm-driven night upon which Kenyon, in the wild disorder of his room, had sat writing it, his face set and pale, if newly determined in expression at least most mournfully so, and, although Loring knew not one word of its contents, the message could scarcely be one of fond farewell and devotion to the girl who sat before him now reading it.

Loretta made no comment on the letter, except that as they walked onward she remarked,—

"I suppose he told you I was to put the house in order?"

Loring nodded. "Oh, yes, indeed, and insisted on my buying a lot of things after he went away and bringing down some traps of his own

from his Boston rooms. Do you suppose we can get any one to hang paper, or do any painting, or that sort of thing, about here?"

"Oh, yes," said Loretta, quickly: "over at the Main there are good workmen."

"Then that will be all right," said Loring, cheerfully. He looked at the face just beside his shoulder in the twilight, and added,—

"I suppose Blake wrote you as pleasant a letter as he could under the circumstances?"

"Yes," said Loretta, quietly: "it was very kind."

Mrs. Lyons and Phoebe were awaiting them at the side-entrance, which was the one generally used at Little Fenn, because of its square porch and wide door-way. Although they greeted Loring with great cordiality and had questions enough to ask about the departure of Mr. Blake, yet it was very evident that the minds of both women were burning with desire to see the parcels opened. Loring caught this with a sense of great amusement to himself, and as soon as he had finished the supper bountifully set before him he suggested opening the things then and there in the hall. Midway in that ancient place a long table stood, above which brackets for lamps were set,—a portion of the hideous which Kenyon meant to pull down. But they served very well now to illuminate this grave interior, shining from above as Loring knelt down and, with Loretta's aid, cut the cords of the famous parcels and displayed the treasures first of one and then of another, Mrs. Lyons and Phoebe moving in shadow at a sort of contemptuous distance.

Loring had taken his sister to the most artistic places to be found in Boston, and the result was a collection of stuffs for window-hangings and other draperies, and some rolls of paper of the most perfect then known design, all of which thrown open to these spectators produced the silence of dismay.

Loretta, it is true, was about to lay a furtively admiring hand upon a heap of silk in which the pomegranate was outlined against a paler red, when Mrs. Lyons, touching it disdainfully with the toe of her boot, exclaimed,—

"For the land sakes alive! Where ever did Kenyon Blake hunt those things up! If that poor thin thing ain't just about the *look- ingest* I ever did see!"

It had flashed across Loretta's mind that perhaps all this was part—it might be something like the surroundings, or the color—of that life of Kenyon's she so longed to penetrate. She did not like these things, exactly; she too thought them queer and odd and out of place; but Loring's face was gravely approving, and he opened the second parcel with evident relish, showing off various odds and ends of china in an artistic design, some book-shelves in pieces ready for joining, and finally—what caught Loretta's eye quickly—a small case of books. He brought the color like a flood of damask to her cheeks by saying, quietly,—

"I brought those down because I know they are Kenyon's favorites."

Long and anxiously did the two older women turn over the silks

and portières and look at the rugs which two days before the point of Miss Bella Loring's parasol had touched with such pleased approval.

"Where in the wide world was all this going to be put?" was what they thought first, not having as yet grasped the idea that Loring in his friend's name meant to bring painters and plasterers and paper-hangers into the house and make of it something such as Kenyon thought a home. And it should be the first rudiment of what he called Loretta's nineteenth-century education, it not being worth while, he surmised, for her to study or learn to care much about the dead-and-gone people of a thousand years ago. Heroes or heroines she should have, but they should come either of the living present or its twin-sister, that past which is our own because it was only of yesterday.

He seemed, as they both rose from turning the silks over on the floor, to divine something of the meaning in Loretta's expression.

"You must set your house in order," he said, smiling, and, in a pleasant undertone, "and really it will be good fun for you to do it; and then—do you know?—did Kenyon tell you?—my aunt Mrs. Bailey wants you to come and see her as soon as possible. Just now she is at her summer place; but I take it you will like it there best for a little while."

And he followed Loretta after her aunt and Phoebe Sparks, leaving the hall-way colored richly, and the very staircase heavy with the Oriental rugs cast down upon it, while the glaze of a blue jar stood in the midst of a hundred peacock plumes which had been strewn beside it.

CHAPTER IX.

"Now, Don, I *really* must go."

"Oh, just a minute longer!" The little thin nervous hand tightened its grasp upon Loretta's. "One minute can't make any difference, even if you do have to put on a party dress."

"But, Don, what if I were to be late?"

"Well, Aunt Pen wouldn't mind. Tell her it's me, and you know Angus won't care if you say that."

Loretta laughed in the candle-light with almost more of childish inflection than the voice of the child before her could have shown. The room in which she and the child were seated was large and somewhat heavily furnished, although every device for an invalid's comfort had been essayed, and there was certainly no lack of luxury or cheerfulness about it. From the wide open fireplace to the introduction of bamboo furniture, all that could be devised had been carried out, and the candles lighted in sconces on the walls gave here and there gleams of pictures such as were scarcely suited to a child's taste, but very pleasing to Angus Loring's little brother.

It was nearly four months since Loretta had taken up her abode with the Baileys, the strange chances of war, so much more to be expected than to be wondered at, keeping Kenyon away, and it is hardly a matter for surprise that the tall young figure kneeling by the couch,

now moving away into the firelight, looked very different from the girl who four months ago Angus Loring had thought might be a Sheila. But perhaps only one who had not seen her in the interval could fairly judge of and detect the change. She wore an out-door costume of rich dark velvet with some touches of fur about the throat and wrists, which may have done something towards setting off the peculiar character of the girl's beauty, but well did Loring know that the change was not so much in the girl's outward bearing or in the dress she might or might not wear. He had urged nothing upon her, had taken her very slowly and with infinite prudence and tact, but had seen to it that she was living out every hour of her new life, and, whether in repose or in action, the influences about her were slowly being felt.

"If I come back and show you myself in the new party dress, will that do?" said Loretta, smiling from the fire upon him.

Donald surveyed her critically.

"I think that's a splendid dress you have on now," he said, taking in the perfection of finish in the costume, which certainly became her very well. "A lot of those men that Angus calls the boys were up here the other day, and—do you know that Whewell?—well, he means to paint your picture in that very dress; for he said so."

"Oh, I guess not," said Loretta, hastily. "The new party dress is beautiful, Don; and I will tell you something else, very early to-morrow morning."

Master Donald interrupted her with a sweeping gesture. "Say you will do it to-night if I am awake when you come home."

"Oh, my dearest, I cannot promise that: Aunt Pen and Angus would be very angry."

"But if I *am*," persisted the little invalid, querulously; "just if I *am*."

"Well, then," said Loretta, slowly, "if it should just happen so, I could come in for a minute afterwards and tell you about it,—something, that is."

"It's at the Caulfields', isn't it?" he said, severely.

"Yes, dear; you know we have to be early, because that Russian violinist is to be there, and you know"—she smiled—"that I am to sing."

"There, now!" cried the boy, glad of a new grievance. "You never told me what you were going to sing."

"Oh, I think it is because I must have sung them so often for you, dear, that I forgot to mention it," said Loretta, kneeling down again by the sofa. "I am to sing something of Rubinstein's,—that 'Good-Night' you like, you know,—and the song about the nightingale!"

The boy considered this question for a moment before answering, "Why can't you sing the Russian song?"

He might have felt the slight quiver that passed through Loretta's frame, but her hand, held in both of his, did not move as she answered,—

"You know, dear, we said the other day we'd save that for just up here or over in the studio. I was never to sing that in a crowd of people."

They rested thus a moment in silence, Donald no doubt turning over in his mind some pretext for detaining Loretta, but, none appearing, he said, in a dejected tone,—

"Well, then, if you *want* to go."

The girl rose to her feet. "I will be back in a few moments," she said, stooping down to kiss one of his thin little cheeks, and a moment later she was walking swiftly down the wide hall-way to her own room.

When Loring had brought Kenyon's wife up to Boston, she had said to him before they entered Mrs. Bailey's house, "You have been so good to me, is there anything in your aunt's home I can do for you?"

"Yes: you can be good to my poor little brother Donald. I know how well you can treat children. I have not forgotten that night on the rocks, nor how you looked with those little arms clinging about your neck. And a suffering child,—one condemned perhaps to years of pain and weariness,—such a one would appeal to you, Loretta, I am sure."

He had fallen into the way of speaking to her by her Christian name, the cousinship with Kenyon giving him a certain right, and, as he himself said, it made so many matters easier for them both, since in the days to come he might be the only man she could call upon for all sorts of small services which a man can yield to the women of his kin.

Nothing further had passed about the little lad, but what Loretta began for Loring's sake she did now for her own. A bond of friendship had sprung up between her and the boy which was certainly the truest she had ever known. If it came to pass that he was called by all the household too exacting in his demands upon the girl, yet what would she have taken in exchange for all their hours of talk, during which he told her more of the world than she had ever known, yet told it in his simple fashion! And among all the kind people in the household she knew that, except it were Angus, he *cared* the most for what *she* thought and felt, for what *she* did and said, for how *she* came and went and what impressions *she* gained of all things in this strange world about her. They met on many common grounds, yet Donald was oftenest her counsellor. If to him Kenyon Blake's wife was of all beautiful beings on earth the fairest, she I fancy at that time would have been quicker to write the word friend against the boy's name than that of any other upon earth. That the friendship might die away with the years to come Loretta never thought of for an instant. It was not that she expected his own life to be shortened, but she had not yet learned what, in part, Loring would like to have had her, to doubt the sincerity of word or look, to question the absolute truthfulness of what might be said.

Mrs. Bailey, under strict orders from Kenyon, and with every possible desire and inclination to do as she was bidden, thoroughly enjoying having Loretta with her, had provided the girl's room with every luxury of modern art, and it was into an apartment almost too exquisite in its appointments that the girl stepped this evening to make

ready for the *musicale* and be in time to show the new evening dress to Donald.

The boy lay still upon his couch, his hands above his head, watching the spots of light and shadow upon the wall before him. The house was very still. Dinner was long ago over, and these hours just about twilight were the times above all others when he counted on a visit from Loretta. From her drives, her walks, her expeditions out shopping or into society, she would bring into his room the cheerful glow of her presence, giving him her hand out of her muff to feel how warm it was or to tell him promptly the last funny thing she had seen or heard; then there would be talks perhaps of quieter things. He liked to see Loretta sitting in the fire-light, and he liked to hear about the Fenns; and he had told her, as I said, many things, and there was a tacit understanding that every bit of news about Kenyon he was to garner and let her have. There were days when he would be carried over to Loring's studio, and the ebb and flow of conversation there of course reached the boy with very direct meaning whenever Blake and his affairs, or perhaps Mrs. Blake herself, were talked about. And from him Loretta, whose ideas about the duties of a war-correspondent were still unsubstantial or undetermined, gathered suggestions which made her, as she thought, able to piece out what they called Blake's campaign. And from the boy she learned of Kenyon's wide popularity among all those of his brother's friends whom he knew. He remembered nights when Angus and Kenyon had sat with him during some of his very painful hours, and how their careless eloquence about events passing in their lives had fascinated him. How little any one in the household, save perhaps Angus himself when he came and went, guessed of the sacredness of the friendship of these two! Donald longed now for strength of limb, for bravery of arm, for firmness of step, that he might do something—be something—for Loretta's sake. But his friendship, his interest, had he but known it, were all-sufficing. Awakened to many happy things in life, Loretta had yet that craving at her heart to feel herself of some real consequence to some one human being, and this she unquestionably was to Donald.

The boy's following of a streak of light across the wall suddenly ended in a dazzling apparition of Loretta standing in the door-way in her new gown, her cloak of fur and pale gray velvet thrown back from her shoulders and revealing the exquisite simplicity of a dress of white silk with lines on either side of some silvery embroidery.

Lace of a filmy kind revealed the fairness of her neck and arms, but in the square cut and broad band of the bodice was something which gave her the look of a heroine in Donald's favorite King Arthur.

The boy sat up, uttering a cry of delight, but presently drew down his face again as Loretta stooped to kiss him good-night, and again the "Must you go?" was wailed forth, and the girl, hastening along the corridor and down the flight of stairs to the drawing-room, knew well enough that after her hint of "something" in the morning Donald would force himself to keep awake.

CHAPTER X.

MRS. BAILEY was spoken of so often as a "type" that it became necessary to explain of what, and then it was discovered that the charming elderly lady combined all sorts of qualities which go to make up a perfect hostess, a fast friend, and a cultivated though cosmopolitan American. Her home had almost always been in Massachusetts,—rather persistently so, some of her friends said,—but she had taken many a trip abroad. She had had responsibilities in regard to the Loring, had received Angus into her home and heart directly he was left alone in the world, and Donald was brought to her as a matter of course. Secretly her cousin Kenyon Blake was her ideal of very much that was worth while in a man, and his thin fine young countenance looked at Loretta from various frames throughout the house and confronted her with distressingly different expressions and at various periods of life in the albums which Mrs. Bailey kept in her charming library.

There was one girl among the Loring, rather the down-trodden member of the family just at present, since she was determined upon a career, but, as "everybody" in the musical or literary world worth hearing or knowing came in turn or time to Mrs. Bailey's house, Bella Loring had ample opportunity to indulge her enthusiasms without carrying them too far. This young lady visited a great deal among her friends, and, although quite independent of her aunt or brother, made a point of asking their advice on all financial matters, generally to discover that her own point of view was directly the opposite of theirs. When definitely in town for the season or part of it, she divided her time between Mrs. Bailey's house, where her room was always sacredly kept for her, and "The Brunswick Hotel," where she shared a very gorgeous apartment with some friends from another State who came thither regularly to enjoy Boston and Miss Loring together.

One of Angus's first remarks to Loretta after her arrival at her aunt's had been to beg of her to be sure to make friends with his sister Bella.

"Because if you do," he declared, "you will find her the jolliest sort of girl going."

Loretta had learned since then something of what this phrase meant and might be made to mean, but she had walked unconsciously directly into Miss Bella's good graces, first by admiring a dog which she had brought to Donald, a pug with the most audacious eyes ever set in canine head, next by assuring her that she knew very little and was not clever in any way at all, upon which Bella Loring got up and kissed her.

"My dear girl," she said, taking a place upon the sofa next her, "you are the only wise woman I have met in ten years."

Loretta's utter inability to meet these remarks produced a silence which led Miss Bella on to talk; and before the morning was over, the two were fast friends. The pug was christened "Bismarck" and transferred to Donald's room, and thenceforth became his companion except

when taken out tenderly in Loretta's keeping. Many a morning during this season had the two girls led him a tramp across the Common, talking on all sorts of subjects, as Miss Bella liked to do, Loretta never afraid to question this downright good-hearted and unworldly adviser, who certainly had the faculty of laying facts bare before the eye in the most unscrupulous fashion, and who never failed to criticise freely her own relations as well as other people, if she believed that they deserved it.

Just at present Miss Loring was at her aunt's house; and Loretta, enjoying as she still did the rustle of silk draperies about her feet, went down to the library, knowing that both ladies were probably awaiting her.

It was not always a good "evening room," that which Loretta entered a little shyly, unless all the candle-lights were ablaze on state occasions. The rich luxuries of the room, the old oak, the carved furniture, the fine pictures and solemn book-shelves, seemed rather gloomy. Twilight or firelight subdued all these; while their morning hours were perfection. Loretta's figure in the shining white silk with the little touch of silver about it seemed to create a central space of light as she entered, while from another door leading into the drawing-room Bella Loring and her aunt appeared, evidently just at the end of a discussion.

Miss Loring might have been twenty-five, or thirty, or thirty-five, or, in some lights and some costumes, twenty-two; but one thing was clearly apparent to all beholders, which was that no adventitious aids were employed to set off her elderly good looks or dignify what might have been her youthful ones. She was a slight, graceful woman, rather taller than Loretta, and she wore gowns in the daytime that came straight from her London tailor, and in the evening much that was brilliant in silk and satin. The fair type of the Loring was shown to great advantage in her finely-cut high-bred features, the coil of soft fair hair which seemed ready to adapt itself to any fashion, and the blue eyes, which, if less critical than those of Angus or brighter than those of Donald, had still the one characteristic of the Loring eye,—a shrewd good humor. Miss Loring reduced every one of her theories to complete insignificance by her own course of action; but this Loretta need never know, or, if she did, Loring argued to himself, it would not harm her: she would like Bella all the better.

"Very good indeed, my dear," was Miss Loring's comment on the new gown; and Mrs. Bailey, whose blonde type was, with certain characteristics strengthened, merely her niece's grown older, came forward, beginning to fasten the fur cloak about Loretta's shoulders, smiling approval gently, and then glancing with satisfaction at their three figures, for Miss Loring was very smart indeed in a new gown of black satin and lace, and Mrs. Bailey, in one of her gowns for evening wear, looked so precisely like herself that no doubt a dozen people in the room would know her from the color of the gown, the turn of her shoulders, or the whole graceful courtesy of her manner, before they heard her name or saw her face.

"The Caulfields are such dreadfully punctual people," said Bella, enveloping herself in furs and a great deal of black lace about the

head: "do let us be on time, aunt. I want to hear Valsati's violin solo so much."

But when the three had driven through the clear cool streets to their destination it was Miss Loring that detained them all in the dressing-room, declaring that they had better not go down-stairs before somebody worth talking to had arrived.

To Loretta, as well may be imagined, all these occasions of social life were still somewhat spectacular. But she already knew that her appearance in a room created some sort of special attention,—some half-audible comment,—something which produced a sensation; and, having so often ascribed it to the fact of her husband's fame or the splendor of her apparel, she had begun to feel it of late as something more directly personal,—as though the chance acquaintances she was making daily knew more of her history than she had supposed. Not that even now Loretta regarded herself as in any degree a heroine of romance. The Fenns, with their somewhat sombre traditions of commonplace and yet strong active life, her own bringing up, the strangeness of her wedding,—none of these things appealed to the girl as likely to give her presence in the Boston season a charm peculiarly their own. Loring had so studiously tried to avoid all talk about the war, had managed so often to keep daily papers from her sight, that she had not as yet acquired the habit of looking regularly for news from Russia; but scarcely an hour of her life passed that she did not think of Kenyon as in some land of burning sunshine and pitiless marches, or of fog and rain, of sleepless nights and anxious hours of watching. For it was natural to one of this girl's temperament that the few impressive points which reached her mind should remain there to the exclusion of even a thought of detail. In her very sleep she had started up, fancying that she beheld her husband flung from his saddle or perhaps engaged in some deadly combat, and daytime would bring a letter in which a merry scene of bivouac life would be depicted. One such Kenyon might have painted for her: he had written with shells flying about him, and the merry-making, such as it was, going on within a hundred yards of where the dead from the field of battle were being laid away. The fact that there was a confusion in her own fancies and Kenyon's careless words seemed to make it possible for her to obey Mrs. Bailey and go out into scenes like this. To-night a sense of personality was growing upon the girl, and she meant to talk to Loring about it when he should return on the morrow; and as she followed Mrs. Bailey into the drawing-room all these thoughts combined to give her face its gravest, sweetest look. There was, as usual, the quick buzz of conversation, the interchange of small talk which she was beginning to understand, going on around them; but presently, with a little nod to Mrs. Bailey, Loretta went away on the arm of one of her special friends, an old army officer who had known Kenyon's father long ago.

Their destination was the music-room in the L of the house, and Loretta seated herself with her venerable companion on one of the crimson benches extending along two sides of the room, the grand piano occupying a central space, from which Valsati, with the emotions of his

music still lingering about him, approached her, smiling and wiping his brow.

"I am sorry you were not here while I played," the young man said, ruefully, and turned to the old officer: "Sir, when Mrs. Blake is present I do my best. I know how it is: the music reaches her."

"But I know nothing of it," Loretta said, smiling up at him.

"One does not need to know to feel," said the Russian, gravely.

"True enough," thought Loretta. "I wonder how one would feel if one *did* know."

There was a little movement among a group near the piano, and a young lady whom Loretta had noticed on entering the room was coming forward to play. She was small but exceedingly graceful in figure, and her dress, if a trifle original in its combination of colors and the flash of Oriental jewelry, became her wonderfully well. A well-set head, masses of golden hair, dark eyes that were bent upon the keys, a profile of dainty regularity,—all these characteristics Loretta noticed, wondering where she had seen something like the face or the movements of the girl's hand upon the keys before her. But her music put a stop to any speculative tendency of the kind. She might have been playing for a roomful or for herself alone, so absorbed did she appear in producing those sounds which seemed to be her very own. She played first a gavotte of Bach's, from which she seemed of her own accord to drift into a strange wild sort of melody which made her lift her eyes to Valsati and bring him at once to the piano. Every one understood, it would appear, the caprices of the young violinist, and no one seemed at all surprised when he produced his violin and joined the girl promptly in the music, that seemed to glide from off the tips of her fingers delicately and yet with that sort of reserve force which belongs to all true artists.

"Is it not beautiful?" Loretta said to her old companion. "Oh, I should like so much to know her! Besides, there are ever so many people coming near here I don't care to talk to." And the girl indicated with a wave of her fan two or three young men who usually followed in her train.

The old soldier laughed. "I have no doubt she will be delighted to know you," he said, and, with much gallantry, rose and went over to the piano when the music had ceased.

Loretta saw the two approaching her, and, though she did not catch the name of the girl, held out her own hand eagerly and with such a pretty look of welcome that the look of surprise or half-annoyance on the other's face melted away. It proved to be the one episode of Loretta's evening, for even her own singing amounted to very little, she thought to herself, since she did not feel at that time like singing either of the ballads put down for her, but her talk with this girl seemed worth coming twice as far to have enjoyed. They began at once about the music, and Loretta learned that her new acquaintance had studied abroad in two or three foreign capitals, that she knew nearly every one in the room, and that she was likely to leave Boston the next day. How Loretta contrived to extract all this information she hardly knew herself, since she had been rather the silent one of the two, but her

companion recalled later the frank challenge in Loretta's look which had accompanied every word. To question where she wished to understand, to express opinions when she felt them,—were not these proper things? thought Kenyon's wife; and the other girl, half amused, and more than half fascinated, indulged her charming curiosity.

"I live so quiet a life," the stranger said, as they were parting, "that coming up to Boston is quite a change for me;" but she added, "I may see you to-morrow some time in the afternoon at Mr. Loring's studio."

It seemed a moment later that the whirl of the evening in which Loretta found herself engrossed separated them. She had to sing again, and when she looked around it was to encounter a number of faces known to her, but not that of her new acquaintance. She might, indeed, not have known her name, but for what occurred later in the night. She had made her promised visit to Donald, had knelt down beside the boy for an instant and told him something of the evening, and was in her own room again, when Miss Loring's maid came with a message from her mistress to say that if Mrs. Blake had not gone to bed, would she come into her room?

There had been some threatening, so Loretta thought, in Bella's eye when the three ladies lingered on the staircase-landing before separating for the night, and she wondered what word of counsel or suggestion, what piece of satirical fun about the evening, Miss Bella had to impart before she slept. She had not even taken off her evening dress, and came in to find Miss Loring fresh from the hands of her Abigail, looking, as she always did, remarkably well in a white wrapper, and very comfortably arranged for the next hour upon her sofa, with a book and a lamp on a little table at her side.

"With Donald again, I suppose," said Miss Loring, shortly. "How many good hours of your life you waste spoiling that child, Loretta!"

Loretta came over to the chimney-piece, and, leaning her hands upon it and her head rather wearily against one of them, said, quietly,—

"We won't discuss it, Bella. I know I am right."

"No, we won't," she assented, "because I have something much more important to tell you. I know it would be very disagreeable if I were to go about in company telling you whom you might and whom you might not talk to," but, seeing the pink color steal up Loretta's cheek, Miss Loring made haste to add, "and of course you would have the right to tell me to mind my own business if I did so, Loretta dearest."

Bella sat upright, and Loretta, struck by something unusual in her tone, turned suddenly, facing her with very scarlet cheeks. "Loretta, I do want to tell you just this. Don't try to make a friend of Miss Chetwynde, and take my advice for it, and don't talk about her before Aunt Pen."

"What have I done?" said Loretta, eagerly. "Do you mean the girl who played so well? General Macrae introduced me to her, and I didn't catch the name, and I thought her delightful."

Miss Loring made a gesture of something like despair. "My dear,

there are some things here among the people I know better than you do, which you must take my word for. Now, pray understand, I say all this for all our good. Let Margaret Chetwynde alone."

CHAPTER XI.

LORING's studio was situated so far within sight of his aunt's dwelling that by going up to the observatory at the latter one could see the roofing and the upper windows of the building where Loring had set up his special Lares and Penates. Quite early in the year Donald had, with Loring's and Loretta's assistance, established a set of signals between the houses, which were merely decorative and amusing to the boy, since at any time a message could have been sent back and forth to announce Loring's return to town, or the fact that Donald and Loretta were going out in the carriage, or that Miss Loring had come home, or other similar pieces of intelligence which Donald vainly believed caused his brother to toil up-stairs several times a day in order to discover them from the variety of indications made in the observatory window. That these pieces of information reached him in any quicker or more direct fashion the child never suspected; and indeed it did sometimes chance that Loretta's first knowledge of Loring's return to town was when the little flag on its very shaky stick which was all, he declared to her, the owners of the building would permit, made its appearance on the roofing, to be tied up with black ribbon when he was away, and decorated with a bold streamer of red, white, and blue when Angus, so to speak, was in residence.

Loretta and her little companion felt certain that the promising signals would appear that day. Loring had gone on to New York to a club dinner, and had arranged before starting that Donald and Loretta, and his sister, if she chose, should come over to his studio for what the child called a "long afternoon," and what to one of the party, at least, always seemed the very shortest that any week could contain.

About three o'clock in the afternoon Loretta returned from a trip to the observatory to inform Donald that the flag was out and the streamers flying. Miss Loring, who had been reading aloud to her brother, looked from the child to Loretta with an expression of almost contemptuous amusement.

"I really cannot understand this thing between you," she said, laughing. "Donald, why are you so silly? It would be so easy to send James over to ask if Mr. Angus had come back; and I should think," she added, ruthlessly, "that Angus would feel too foolish for anything, going up and sticking out that ridiculous little thing on the top of a great big building."

Loretta looked at her from behind Donald's sofa imploringly. "I never feel foolish about it in the least," she said, reprovingly. "Donald and I like it, and we think it great fun. We've all sorts of little signals for Angus." (She didn't add that they, being almost invisible from the studio-building, had to be explained to him by special mes-

senger before he appeared at his aunt's house in the evening.) "We find out how he is getting along with any picture that we specially like, and all sorts of things."

Whatever Miss Loring murmured as she went away, it sounded like, "What a pair of geese!" but it was very certain that she loved Loretta none the less for these so-called foolish marks of understanding what the boy cared for and what amused and comforted him, and she bore with good humor Loretta's little scolding as the two followed Donald and his attendant down the stairs.

"I suppose I never could do that sort of thing, carry it out well, or enjoy it," said Miss Loring, decidedly subdued, and inclined to show real humility. "I don't know what it is about you, Loretta, that makes you different from other people. By the way, there is an old friend of yours coming up to dine to-night,—Dr. Maynard. You shall make the most of him this evening. Aunt Pen has asked him to dinner. The only way I chanced to hear of this first was through having seen Angus. Of course I couldn't pretend before Donald to anything of the sort, because it would have spoiled your little drama with the signals."

"Dr. Maynard!" Loretta's heart fairly stood still. He was her first visitor from The Fenns, and, although she had kept up as close a correspondence as the weather would permit with her relations on the Islands, yet to see one of them, even though it were a man who so rarely lived with them, yet one whom she had known there always, how joyful would this encounter be!

Miss Loring, as they drove the slight distance around the corner to her brother's studio, explained that he would join them later there and come across back to Mrs. Bailey's with them.

The elevator took them easily up the one flight of stairs to Loring's studio, which was a room large enough to satisfy the demands of half a dozen artists, and which perhaps was much more noticeable for its air of luxury, bric-à-brac, and fine hangings than for its mere convenience as a workshop. But, at all events, to Loretta during this winter it had become a place sacred to many hours of what she might have called her growing upward or her receiving new impressions from a Mentor as wise and genial, as keen and anxious to defend her, as ever woman knew. For her the soft Eastern hangings of the room, the divans, the shining polished floor and rugs, the huge fireplace, which was one Loring actually had brought from Holland and set up here, the space where the piano stood, all were no less dearly associated to the girl than the sketches hanging about, or those standing face to the wall which he sometimes permitted her to bring out to the light of day and scrutinize.

And to enter this beloved room and find its master standing at his easel, but ready enough to turn with greetings of all sorts for the party,—this was enough to gladden Loretta's life for many days to come.

Donald had to be made comfortable upon the sofa, and Miss Loring to move about gracefully to detect any novelties in the room, and then Angus and Loretta shook hands and made their special inquiries of each other, which could not be spoken by either of them without some

little thrill of gladness and of special welcome when there had been some days of separation between them, and Loretta, still holding her friend's hand, whispered, very confidentially,—

"Oh, Angus, there is something special I have been wishing to talk to you about. But it will take quite a time. I don't mind Donald, but I do mind Bella just a little."

"But she is going out presently," said Angus, in his kindest tones. "A young lady I believe you met here last night is coming to the studio, and Bella"—he laughed a little queerly—"is going to take her round to see something special at Williams and Everett's."

The color rose quickly in Loretta's cheeks. She had liked Margaret Chetwynde too thoroughly to hear her spoken of in this way, as some one to be got rid of, but she only said, with a little reproach in her tone,—

"I know whom you mean, of course,—Miss Chetwynde. I thought her very lovely."

"Ah me! ah me!" half sighed, half laughed Angus. He moved back to his easel; but, sitting in front of it with no effort towards putting so much as one stroke to the half-painted picture, he began to tell them about the dinner in New York.

"You should have heard the talk about Blake," he said, looking at them with beaming eyes. "By the way, Loretta, has he mentioned in his last letter the fact that the *Albion* may discontinue this special line of correspondence, and that the English daily press has already offered him and Ranford together splendid work to do?"

Loretta from her place at Donald's side looked up swiftly. "No," she said, and added, "Then that will delay him."

Loring felt confused, or as though it might have been agreeable to give his information from the shaky little signal-staff on the roof. Face to face with Kenyon's wife, into whose whole attitude and manner had come something which showed how vital this question was to her, it was difficult to proceed with a story Kenyon ought to have written first to her himself. But he took up his palette and began working boldly as he went on:

"Perhaps there hasn't been time for him to write of it. Young Robertson told me how it came about, and that Kenyon was wild to stay and see things on a little further." "I am doing this thing beautifully," was Loring's private reflection. He looked furtively at Loretta, whose face was now slightly averted, composed and resolute. "You see," he went on, "there is something about a war-correspondent which it is terribly hard work to understand unless you have the gift for it yourself. The first stroke of work Blake ever did seemed to light the fire in him; and it has raged there ever since."

There was a moment's pause, and then Loretta said, very gravely,—

"It isn't patriotism?"

"Not in the least,—not any more than fox-hunting is; though I don't know that I am right in speaking even so lightly of what the war-correspondent feels, for he is seeing history, remember. He is reviewing and recording the events of the life of nations. Blake had tried his novice hand at it before the Germans got into Paris. He was

tremendously popular with some special Uhlans, I well remember, and there were some boys in the regiment that would, I believe, have laid down their lives for him."

"I was almost a child then," said Loretta.

"Well, you were by no means the delightfully grown-up and sophisticated young person I see before me now," said Loring, trying to look humorous. "Now, you might say, womanlike. How could he be so fierce and excited over the Franco-Prussian war, and now have his whole heart and energy perhaps bound up in Skobelev's ventures? You can fancy living right in the thick of these historic occurrences,—the life of adventure, how far away all else can be put from one, and what it is to a man who has done as well as Blake has so far to carry on his work to the bitter end, whether the Cossacks or the Turks come out victorious. At all events, he will have lived ten years of life while these pages of history have been turned before his eyes."

Loretta was silent so long that Loring began to torment himself lest he had not put things in the best way for his friend, but she said presently, and looking at Bella with a little wistful smile,—

"I wonder how much of what you would call an episode, Kenyon's visits to The Fenns of late will now mean in his life."

Ten minutes later, while Bella stood in the window awaiting Miss Chetwynde's arrival, Loring said to Loretta, earnestly,—

"Whatever you may have to ask me about, Loretta, whatever advice you want, let me tell you something. Once upon a time you were a child hidden away back somewhere in a shell. Do you know what a wonderful woman you are fast growing to be?"

Loretta was eager to answer this, but the portière moved, and Bella was seen taking a note from a servant addressed to herself. She read it aloud at once. It contained a few lines from Miss Chetwynde expressing her regret at not appearing at the studio that day; whereupon Bella promptly said she had no intention of wasting her whole afternoon there, and, warning Loretta and Donald to be ready for her within an hour, went away on some errands, leaving the two friends virtually alone together, since Donald counted only as a little occasional note of affection or approval when something which he liked in the conversation caught his ear.

CHAPTER XII.

"I HAD a letter to-day," said Loretta, putting her hand into her pocket and looking rather quizzically at Loring, "but before I show it to you I will ask my questions. You remember our talk at Choke Harbor on Little Fenn that day when you tried to make me understand something of—of this life here? Well, I want to ask you why it is I feel so thoroughly and entirely different as a human being, some-way, than I did then." She had thrown aside her fur-trimmed jacket, and was standing not far from Loring's easel, looking to him, as she had looked for some time past, like the awakening Psyche. It was with the young man as though some secret hand were touching lightly

the girlish brow and lips, putting grace into her movements and new vigor into the strong young limbs. Still, it was Loretta of The Fenns. She went on: "I feel it, somehow, more in a crowd of people. When I go into a room I have a queer sensation of myself, as it were. I want to know why it is they look at me, or seem to care to talk to me, or make me a kind of companion. It has puzzled me all along, but of late more and more."

Loring laughed joyously. "My dear Loretta," he exclaimed, going towards her, "do you not see just what it is? But no, you don't: it would spoil it all if you did. You are finding out yourself; you are learning what it is to become one of the moving active multitude. It is not self-consciousness, it is not vanity: it is only just as it should be."

No, thought Loring, no vanity as yet had stirred the exquisite delicacy of the girl's feeling. The beautiful grave face before him had lost none of its first charm, and as Loretta turned away he felt a deep sense of satisfaction simply in observing how entirely she was working out his prophecies.

"Now for the letter," said Loretta, smiling; and, possessing herself once more of Donald's little hand, she sat down upon the child's sofa, and with the other hand smoothed out a sheet of blue-lined note-paper, two sheets of which were closely written in a cramped, old-fashioned hand. The letter was dated Mayridge, February 27, and began,—

"MY DEAR NIECE:

"I returned last week from my trip to the West, and, hearing that you are still in Boston, write urging you to come to see me as soon as possible. I have a suggestion to make to you which I think your friends will approve. There is no reason why I should not mention it here. Kenyon Blake is my only nephew, and has lived, as you know, a large part of his life with me. My brother and I did not agree exactly as to the methods of the boy's education, but my brother, with much generosity, forbore to press any of his theories upon Kenyon until his judgment was formed, so that he actually spent the greater part of his boyhood with me, going down to The Fenns when you were a little girl, and when you were growing up to womanhood only from time to time. Whether you know it or not, it was the desire of my brother's heart that Kenyon should make you his wife, and he also had my approval when the engagement was pronounced. Now for my plan, or suggestion. It seems to me an unfitting thing that you should not, as his wife, place yourself as near to direct news of him as possible: therefore I have to suggest your accompanying me as soon as possible to England; and I suspect Miss Bella Loring would not mind being our companion, if not my cousin Angus himself. Kenyon, whether foolish or not in the business he has undertaken, is in a position of peril from illness or from the chances of war. The most direct news of it all would come to us in London; and there, I think, we might remain until he felt free to come home, which I suppose will be when the Turks have got everything their own way, for I don't believe Russia is capable of at once organizing and sending out a good army

and treating her general officers decently at the same time. But this is not the place for a political discussion. Will you come to me quite by yourself on the ten-o'clock train Thursday morning? You shall be met at the station, and I will see to it that you get home in safety early the next day.

"Kind regards to all of Mrs. Bailey's household.

"Yours sincerely,

"RACHEL DOLLIVER."

"I suppose it is about time you went down there," said Loring, when the letter had been read. "It is the place for you, of course,—where Kenyon spent so much of his time: so no doubt you will find it full of memories,"—he smiled,—“ghosts, perhaps. I have heard it stated that wherever there are memories there must be ghosts.”

But Loretta shook her head.

"Perhaps I have not lived long enough," she said, "to own any ghosts. Don't you think we have to kill something or let something die first?"

"No doubt at all," rejoined Loring; "and, as we are very sure nothing of the kind has ever happened to you, you need not be looking about you for spectres just yet awhile. You must expect to find Mrs. Dolliver entirely devoted to Kenyon's interests."

"Why not?" said Loretta, promptly looking up.

"Well, I mean in this sort of way: if it would advance Kenyon in any way, and if not particularly sinful, I think she would willingly see every one of us ground to powder. I am stating the thing pretty strongly, and you will think so, no doubt, all the more when you see her; but she is certainly as devoted to her nephew as all that. A curious phase of it is her entire complacency in Kenyon's working as he does in his profession. She is aware that it pleases him; she is aware that he obtains a certain amount of downright gratification from it: therefore she would keep the Turks and the Russians fighting for the next ten years, if Kenyon saw fit."

"This is all very dreadful," exclaimed Loretta, trying to laugh, but really beginning to feel dismayed. Nobody in Mrs. Bailey's family, unless it might be Angus himself, impressed one as being at all ready to put himself out for anybody else. There were no very strong enthusiasms one for the other, few demonstrations of any kind, but a very silent good-humored sort of interest in the world to which they belonged and in the open events of the day which they could enjoy in common. But this picture of Kenyon's aunt presented an old lady and a household of entirely different proportions, and, while Loring had his usual manner of banter about him, something decidedly serious lurked in his expression, and as he talked he looked down upon his companion with a very shrewd and anxious manner.

"I was just thinking," he said, "that in all this European idea you must be made to see that she is not considering you in the least. She has got hold of some idea that it is going to be a great benefit for Kenyon. If your judgment goes against it,—indeed, if you don't want to do it,—just show that you have a will of your own in the matter."

"The idea is too new a one," said Loretta; and she added, in a moment, "How do you suppose I feel after living here among you all these months, and hearing and seeing the people and the things I have to remember?—that, for instance, six months ago I simply never thought about Europe at all? I had never in my life seen any one but Kenyon who had been there, and he never talked to me about his life abroad. To go there seems nothing at all to all of *you*, but I——" Loretta smiled, and came nearer to where Loring was standing by the chimney-piece. "Do you remember the day," she continued, "when you brought me up from The Fenns? Well, I feel precisely as if I had been taking steps on and on since that time. It is even something quite important for me to go to a country-place like Mayridge. You have seen The Fenns: suppose that was all you had ever known of the world for twenty years? I don't often talk about this; but you can't think how wonderfully beautiful even the trees on the Common have looked to me at times this winter. But all that has nothing special to do with the letter, has it?"

Whether or not certain events in Angus Loring's past had made him somewhat of a cynic, certain it is that he rarely betrayed himself; but now he had no hesitation in continuing to describe Mrs. Dolliver as a woman with one idea, to the gratification of which she would sacrifice all else, and he was in the midst of beseeching Loretta to "hold her own," when the sound of Bella's voice was heard outside, and she and Dr. Maynard came into the room.

Loretta hardly knew where she was as she found her hands held closely in those of the kind old man; and if Miss Bella Loring had planned a surprise for him she certainly ought to have felt gratified, for the good old doctor made no attempt to conceal his astonishment at the change these months had wrought in Loretta Blake. Holding the girl by the hands, he looked at her almost with tears of delight; and when he saw how entirely able she was to sustain her own part in the little whirl of life going on about her, it seemed to the old man that he was beholding some of his own prophecies coming true.

It was hard to dash her bright spirits by telling her that Mrs. Lyons was far from well and was longing to see her, and that he was going back to The Fenns in a few days and wanted her to accompany him, no matter for how short a time.

But this came later. He observed it more critically when he was seated next to Loretta at Mrs. Bailey's dinner-table, where he silently enjoyed the quiet elegances and luxuries of the room and noted how prettily all her new honors sat upon the girl at his side. He was very certain that Loretta was enjoying herself. It had been indeed during these weeks that a sense of enjoying life and herself, a consciousness of belonging to something that was fascinating in life, had come over her, warming the inner fibres of her nature, gently and yet generously awakening something which seemed to the girl to diffuse itself softly over her whole being. She met such tender stirrings of the power of joyousness with a real delight. Each new pulsation seemed to her to set in motion, as it were, happy and prosperous feelings. Loretta felt herself expanding, and, with no attempt at analysis, had simply given

herself up to the joy of life. Loring, however, looking on, did all the analysis necessary, and he enjoyed what he saw and observed in the most redundant way, learning to know something of what Kenyon's young wife was feeling and thinking by the very changes in her expression, by the peculiarly happy smile that came sometimes to her eyes and to her lips when she was scarcely aware that she was smiling. Dr. Maynard might be in sympathy with all this, but his delight took the form of almost solemn utterances to Loring when they were alone, and it might have been commented on later by either of them that Kenyon's name had been carefully avoided. That Loretta was to decide for herself in regard to going to Mrs. Dolliver's or back to The Fenns every one seemed to think wise and right, though a little chorus of opinions showed how many individual sentiments there were on both sides. Loretta went to bed more contented than she had felt in many a day, the only drawback to her feeling being a dread of finding that Mrs. Dolliver's exactions would be more than she could fulfil. But it was all arranged that she should accept the old lady's invitation the Thursday following, and go down to The Fenns directly afterwards for a few weeks' visit at all events.

CHAPTER XIII.

It was a short enough journey from Boston to Mayridge, but Loretta, who had begun to be quite keen where novelties were concerned, enjoyed the spice of adventure connected with taking it alone. Loring and his sister, and even Mrs. Bailey, whose general frame of mind was that of a large complacency about most of the things in life, had given her innumerable warnings, but they seemed to slip from her careless mind before she found herself at the Mayridge station, where she had only glanced about a moment before she saw a very quiet-looking family carriage with a respectable coachman in a subdued livery, who was looking at her, if the truth were known, with a most profound and surprised admiration. For it need scarcely be said that the servants in Mrs. Dolliver's house had freely discussed the "young master's" marriage, and Thomas's expectation was of some doll-faced country-girl, whereas the only human being on the platform was a stately young person wearing her garments of dark blue with the air of a princess, and who, when she smiled in his direction, seemed to him by far the most beautiful creature he had ever seen.

The man hastened forward to explain that Mrs. Dolliver could not come herself, but—was this Mrs. Blake? Then the door of the carriage was opened, and Loretta took her place, and was quickly whirling through a country where all that was possible to expect of February sunshine—certainly some faint hint of the spring—gave a look as though some wind or fragrance of the South had wakened it into vernal life. It was an historic part of Loretta's country, had she but known it. Down yonder hill the last colonial governor had ridden one night a hundred years ago, flying for his life, and leaving all his

household gods behind him. On the bridge spanning the river, over which they crossed, the council on which hung heavy issues for her country had taken place, while there had been a day when the whole country-side echoed to the sounds of war. But to Loretta it presented only one of the rare pictures of inland scenery which had come within her knowledge. This girl from The Fenns, made fearless about many things, had known the world only until the last few months as a rather barren place, hard to cultivate or make beautiful, and with a turbulent and exacting sea dashing about it on every side. But what she saw now was what Loring painted: this was the entrance, as it might be called, into a country where everything that nature could do welcomed and gladdened the eye. Had Loretta but known it, her frame of mind during that short drive had become perfectly in harmony with the very poets Loring was fondest of reading to her; and, indeed, bits of their verse were confused in her mind with the deeper and more pulsating emotions that stirred her heart.

The Dolliver house stood upon so slight an eminence that it was hard to agree with its mistress that it overlooked any of the verdant valley; but it had its own peculiar sweep of view across the country, and, standing as it did in the midst of a lawn dotted richly with fir-trees, with a garden which was one of the household traditions to the right and a row of terraces to the left, it looked to Loretta like a fitting centre-piece for so much of rural loveliness.

The drive from the gate to the door-way was a short one, but Loretta caught sight of fluted columns, a wide veranda, and a door which was opened before she reached it, and within which the girl saw a wide hall with polished floor, dark rugs, and suggestions of more solid coloring and something more harmonious in design than ever belonged to the Bailey mansion.

An elderly servant met her,—a woman who looked as though she might have belonged all the years of her life to the place, and who had in her manner a mixture of deference, admiration, and condescension; for, beautiful and fascinating as Kenyon's wife might be, good Mrs. Melbury had to remember that she had carried him up and down this very hall a wee baby, had cast him into outer darkness as a boy when he had misbehaved too outrageously for Mrs. Dolliver's presence, had given him of her best of stores in her famous closet, and had seen him grow to the stalwart manhood which she had for years predicted would be his prosperous fate.

"You've had quite a journey, my dear," said Mrs. Melbury. It was impossible not to add something caressing to her first words with Kenyon's young wife, and Loretta smiled back at her, and said, "It seemed so short; but the country is so beautiful. You know I am not used to seeing things like this."

She had begun to wonder whether this were Kenyon's aunt,—whether she should stoop to kiss the small brown cheek of the old woman, which looked like a comfortable russet apple,—but Mrs. Melbury said, quickly,—

"Mrs. Dolliver is waiting for you in the library. She hurt her foot yesterday, and has to keep very still."

And Loretta, pleased with everything she saw about her, followed the housekeeper down the hall to a door which opened unexpectedly into the most charming room she had ever seen.

The girl stood a moment on the threshold, surprised, and almost too confused to recognize the fact that in a western window, propped up carefully in an easy-chair, an elderly lady was seated, looking at her with anxious eyes; but her name was spoken, and she found herself crossing a shining space of floor, to either side of which Turkish carpets gave their warmth and color, while the rows of low book-shelves extending nearly all around the octagonal walls lent the dignity of their contents to the tiers of paintings above. The great chimney-piece in the centre of the room, the wood fire blazing on the hearth, the irregularly-arranged bits of old china, the feather fans, the screens here and there, the easels so arranged as to catch the sunshine flitting through the skylight, the windows of stained glass, and the bits of furniture wholly but charmingly devised for comfort,—all these elements in the room seemed to present themselves to the girl with a strange sort of confusion and yet familiarity, and before she and Mrs. Dolliver had fairly exchanged greetings Loretta with a start remembered something Kenyon had told her, and, looking at the western wall of the room, saw a picture which dominated all the rest. It portrayed the scene which Kenyon had once told her seemed to him the most memorable one in the nation's history. There was the court-house at Harper's Ferry; soldiers were ranged on each side, the bayonet of one lordly-looking man was lifted, a group of Southern gentlemen occupied the background, and on the lower steps stood the figure of Kenyon's hero, his arms bound, the lines of his gray beard parted, while his lips rested for an instant on the brow of a negro child. Loretta scarcely felt as though she needed to look at the brass plate below the picture. Kenyon had described it to her in glowing terms: "The Last Moments of John Brown."

Loretta was recalled to herself by a quick, imperative voice. "So you are Kenyon's wife: sit down, my dear."

Mrs. Dolliver's sharp bright eyes scanned the girl with a little twinkle in them, not of amusement, but of evident satisfaction. The old lady put one of her fine white hands on Loretta's arm, and the two beings nearest on earth to Kenyon looked at each other, and there was a kind of challenge in the glance of each. Loretta's seemed to say, although merrily, "Grind me to powder if you dare;" and the old lady's expressed, "Venture to disobey me."

"Yes," said Loretta, a pale pink in her cheeks,—*"I am Kenyon's wife, Mrs. Dolliver."*

"Stand over there," said the old lady. "I want to see just what you are like, my dear. Kenyon's wife," she continued, reflectively, as Loretta moved back into a space of the shining dark-wood floor and stood as fair a picture as the old room had ever known. Her shining lips and eyes, the pose of her head, and the careless grace of her attitude affected the older woman visibly: her glance softened; she nodded her head, and, taking in every detail of the tall young figure in its rich dress and with its unconscious girlish dignity, she put out her hand and beckoned Loretta to her side again.

"I am glad to see you," Mrs. Dolliver said, very gently for her. "Of course I should have had to ask you here no matter what you were like; but I am glad now. I think, my dear, that we shall be good friends."

Loretta's truthful lips scarcely knew what answer to frame, but she said, "I hope so," with sincerity, as she might have said it to any one near or dear to Kenyon.

"When Kenyon announced his intention of marrying you," the old lady continued, blandly, "I took many things into consideration; but of course my brother's strong desire in the matter influenced me most. Now, my dear, I will not keep you here just yet awhile. Mrs. Melbury will take you across the hall into my room, and you must take your things off and then come back and sit with me, and we will have a nice chat before dinner. I dine early. I dare say the Baileys don't. How is Penelope? Very well? And Bella Loring? But there, there! I'll ring for Melbury, and you shall go with her."

Loretta observed that Mrs. Dolliver waited for no answers to her slowly-uttered fluent inquiries, but seemed to take for granted whatever she chose to make of her visitor's silence. She touched a bell at her side, and Mrs. Melbury's glowing autumnal sort of face appeared, her brisk good humor being far more agreeable, thought Loretta, than Mrs. Dolliver's superior manner. Phoebe Sparks was the only handmaiden Loretta had ever known at The Fenns, and this pleasant woman in some fashion reminded her of that ancient servitor and friend more than any one she had seen since leaving the Islands.

"You are to take Mrs. Blake into my room," said Mrs. Dolliver, "and—perhaps she would like a cup of tea, or something."

"Not a doubt of it," answered Mrs. Melbury from her position near the door. But Loretta protested. She followed the housekeeper down the hall and into a capacious bedroom which it could easily be seen belonged to a woman whose life had long been luxurious. It was richly furnished, but with no attempt at artistic effect like the charming boudoir-like rooms in Mrs. Bailey's house. Ponderous hangings, comfortable chairs, a variety of arrangements for the toilet, and an open fire briskly glowing, were the objects which caught the girl's eye as she laid aside her wraps; and it seemed to her as if in such a house as this one might grow old unconscious of the passing by of years or any of the small distractions of life without. It was a silent kind of house, the voice of Mrs. Dolliver being its chief note of animation, and yet it was curiously self-assertive. Certain signs and sounds of animation in the gardens without rather accented the interior stillness. It was in no degree gloom; it was rather the quiet of a dignified and elegant seclusion.

"It is very quiet here," said Loretta unexpectedly to her companion.

"Quiet, dearie!" rejoined Mrs. Melbury, who was eager for conversation. "Well, if you'd see it all *sometimes*! And when Master Kenyon was a boy!—"

"Yes," said Loretta, eagerly, as the old woman paused, smiling and looking up into the girl's bright face.

"Why, he would come into the house like a—well, like a young

whirlwind! It would be, 'See here, Jacky,'—that was one of his names for me,—'I want my boots cleaned right off. And where's that rascal Jim got my fishing-tackle?' Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" said the old woman, with a happy sigh. "How we *do* miss those days!"

"But Kenyon is never very lively," said his wife, answering the look of interest in her companion's face. "When I was a little girl," she continued, "he used to tease me a great deal, and sometimes run after me; but he——"

Loretta stopped short. Why was it that she loved him so, and yet until lately she seemed never to have known or understood him in the least? What had drawn them together? Could it be that some of those mysterious influences about which only the other night Mrs. Bailey's friends had been talking so wisely had been at work here, leading them blindly to each other? These were distracting thoughts, and Loretta had resolved, if possible, to indulge in very few of their nature, since they seemed to deprive her of any capacity for observing the simple effects in the new life she was leading. Mrs. Melbury was evidently waiting for her to continue what she had been saying.

"Used to tease you?" she exclaimed. "I don't doubt but he did, my dear. Such a torment as he was to us! And always meant to be a soldier, he'd say——"

The tinkle of Mrs. Melbury's bell sounded.

"That's for you to hurry up," said the housekeeper, in a confidential undertone. "It's for you to go and talk as nice as you can to her about Mr. Kenyon."

Loretta walked slowly down the hall, thinking as cheerfully as possible of what might be in store for her. Mrs. Dolliver certainly looked impatient, but her good humor returned when Kenyon's young wife was at her side. There was a deep easy-chair, low and comfortable. This had been drawn near to the old lady's place in the window for Loretta's service, and whether it were to prove the mill of which Angus had warned her in which she was to be ground for Kenyon's sake, or a place of comfortable repose, Loretta did not know, but she took it with an indefinable sense of pleasure in the mere fact that she was really in her husband's home. She leaned back and smiled up at a landscape hanging before her in which a stretch of country near Mayridge was depicted by Loring's faithful hand. The lights were of a November day, but there was scarcely any look of chill in the picture: autumn had not vanished. There was a bit of road-way with alder-bushes and some lingering sumach. The distance showed a level meadow broken by a stream, pollards upright against a flaming sunset sky with gray tones westward. If the general impression was sombre, Loretta knew the painter well enough by this time to feel sure it had been done in his happiest mood. Underneath the landscape a crayon hung,—a girl's head, carelessly sketched. Yet as Loretta's joyous glance wandered from the Mayridge road-way to the pictured face below, she started slightly. Surely she knew the eyes, the curve of brow and chin, the little touch of scorn or girlish cynicism which she became suddenly aware had lingered in her memory as belonging to Margaret Chetwynde.

Mrs. Dolliver's eyes were upon her.

"That crayon," said the old lady, suddenly, "was done a long time ago. I keep it here simply because—well, because Kenyon hung it up there almost the last thing before he went away."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE early dinner and tea were over. Loretta and Mrs. Dolliver were in their former places in the library, but a more confidential relationship was established. The afternoon had seemed to Kenyon's wife to include many incidents of conversation or society. Some visitors had appeared. Loretta had been very properly introduced as "my niece Mrs. Blake," and had come to feel herself part of the household, while, encouraged to frankness by the evident interest the callers showed in her, the girl had talked brightly and fluently except when asked direct questions about Kenyon himself; the pauses here were readily enough supplied by Mrs. Dolliver, or the visitors concluded that Mrs. Blake's anxiety made it a painful topic. But the impression Loretta created on her friends delighted Mrs. Dolliver. As the last carriage drove away, Loretta turned from the window to encounter the very friendliest expression on the old lady's face.

"You will know them all better some day," said Mrs. Dolliver; "for of course you and Kenyon will live here a great part of the time."

Loretta started, but her lips curved with a lovely smile. There was something peculiarly grateful to her in the fact that Mrs. Dolliver so constantly referred to her as Kenyon's wife, giving these hints of a prosperous future. She had been summoned to her tea at that moment, and, sitting alone in the large old-fashioned dining-room, the girl indulged in delicious speculation as to how it might seem when Kenyon perhaps faced her at the other end of this very table. Nothing at Mrs. Bailey's house had suggested this. It seemed to her now almost as though every one but Donald had ignored the fact that sooner or later she and Kenyon would make their home together. But this house, with its dignified air of comfort and prosperity, its stillness that was so agreeable, was *really* in a sense her home,—to be hers and Kenyon's! Facing the table where she sat was a mirror, and Loretta smiled gayly and nodded at her own reflection there. And where would Kenyon sit? She mentally assigned him a place, fancied his dark eyes, and his inquiring if often absent gaze, fastened upon her own, and planned joyfully how she would like to serve him. She would show him, when he returned, how well she understood his moods, his likes and dislikes, his ambitions even, and perhaps his very soul. Suppose he came in by that door? Loretta, left alone by Mrs. Melbury, turned her head furtively, looked at the framework of the door and at the quiet hall beyond, and fancied Kenyon's figure, strong and vigorous, appearing unexpectedly. Suddenly there came to the girl's heart like a flash the memory of the kiss he had given her in parting. For an instant it seemed to her that her

husband's lips were laid in benediction upon her own, and it was like dispelling a happy dream to leave this place and go back to the library and Mrs. Dolliver.

"It is certainly very singular, Loretta," the old lady had remarked when they were by themselves once more, the firelight outshining the glow from two heavy sconces across the room,—“very singular that you seem to know so little of Kenyon's life. But then he has often told me the Fenn people were devoid—utterly *devoid*—of curiosity. I'm sure I don't know where their American ancestry came from. You were asking me a little while ago about his parents.”

“Yes,” came in happy tones from Loretta.

“It's like telling a story to a child,” said Mrs. Dolliver, looking at the girl critically. “Kenyon's father was my brother, you know, of course. There were two boys, and they were inseparable. One was the Mr. Blake you knew at Little Fenn,—Kenyon—or Ken, as we called him,—the other, George. I don't deny that Kenyon's father was my favorite. George Blake was, I think, the finest young man in the county. Well, it is like a great many stories, my dear Loretta. They both fell in love with the same girl, and”—a blush came into the old lady's fine white cheek—“perhaps I did wrong, but I admit that I secretly helped George in his wooing, and no doubt acted a little cruelly by poor Ken. The result was that George carried the day. Of all handsome couples I have ever seen I would give the palm to Jane Forster and George Blake! The wedding made a great stir, especially as nearly every one suspected what I knew to be the fact, that Jane had really been engaged for a time to Kenyon,—indeed, had jilted him. People came from far and wide to the wedding, and, of course, naturally looked for a glimpse of poor Ken's face in the company. Every one likes romance, you know, even if it be tragic.”

“And where was he?” asked Loretta, turning her face quickly towards Mrs. Dolliver. This story was like some cruel bit of Kenyon's history flung before her, and the easy tones of Mrs. Dolliver's voice were unendurable for a moment. Sitting there in the soft lights of the fine room, it seemed to Loretta as though she could see the picture conjured up by Mrs. Dolliver's “romance;” and then as swiftly rose a recollection of her old friend down at Little Fenn,—the melancholy old man who had lived a life which any but Fenn people would have thought impossible. And *he* was the “Ken” this old woman talked of so lightly!—the “Ken” whose presence as a wedding-guest was looked for to add piquancy to a cruel scene!

“Where was he, do you say?” Mrs. Dolliver disliked interruptions when she was in the midst of a recital, and, moreover, there was something which annoyed her slightly in the expression of the young face before her. Loretta's emotions had of late been developing, so that she was swift to show her feelings, and there was indignation, if not horror, in her eyes, and her lips wore the look of pride which seldom touched them except when she was roused by some of the opinions she heard carelessly uttered in society.

“He had disappeared,” said Mrs. Dolliver, continuing her narrative with some impatience. “Not forever. He had simply gone down to

Little Fenn, which he owned, and there, as you know, he lived and died. He was much younger than he seemed to you, I don't doubt. I am the oldest of my family."

"But—that wicked girl!" said Loretta.

"Kenyon's mother! My dear Loretta! Not at all. Jane Forster was one of the most brilliant women I ever knew. It is true she never was thoroughly satisfied with her own life. But"—Mrs. Dolliver in her luxurious chair moved a little uneasily—"which one of us ever is? Jane did not care for George, after all, as much as I had supposed."

"She loved Kenyon, then?" said Loretta, steadily,—"*our* Mr. Blake?"

Mrs. Dolliver laughed. "Possibly. Matchmaking is dangerous business. The fault with it all was the way in which Jane broke with Ken,—pretending up to the last—— However, my dear child, *your* Mr. Blake, as you call him, had his own compensations. When George's boy was born he was named Kenyon, and within a week my poor brother was killed by a railway-accident. We managed to keep it from Jane. She was terribly ill, poor girl; and, indeed, she never recovered her health again."

There was a pause. Events in Loretta's life of late had awakened all the imaginative quality in her nature. The deeper currents of feeling had begun to stir and carry with them comprehension of life and human nature which would have been impossible to the island girl from whom Kenyon had parted. Perhaps the subtlest side of this story of a broken life Loretta understood but vaguely. The actual fact of treachery—of her old friend's misery—she saw plainly as though the picture Mrs. Dolliver carelessly drew were visible in the very flames before her. The burning logs that the girl was gazing down into were not more clear to her vision than was the Kenyon of that other generation who had been so cruelly deceived. And his brother's wife? Had she lived here? Where were the shadows of her life?—the shadows of the three who had gone their way forever, leaving only this cynical old woman to tell their story? Loretta turned her face suddenly towards Mrs. Dolliver.

"Did—Mr. Blake ever see her again?" she asked, gently.

"Yes." Mrs. Dolliver had not intended to give this old family romance any tragic importance, but Loretta's way of listening—or was it of looking at her?—made the old lady uncomfortable against her will. She had so long reconciled herself to her own part in her brother's life that it was certainly unpleasant to have Kenyon's wife, with that grave sweet look of hers, stir any feelings of remorse. She went on a little hurriedly:

"Yes. It was about a year later. Jane sent for him. She was afraid she was going to die: she was that sort of a woman. They had a long talk, here in this very room. I know the substance of what passed. She made Ken promise to look after her boy. I have always had an idea," said Mrs. Dolliver, smiling, as though discussing one of her visitors of the afternoon, "that she fancied she could revive some sentiment in Ken's heart. He certainly did not give her much encour-

agement. But he promised to do all she wished in regard to the child. George's will had left her very free to do as she liked. So time went by. Kenyon—your husband—was about eight years old when his mother died, but I think he had learned one or two lessons thoroughly."

"What were they?" came eagerly from Loretta.

"To begin with, that under no sort of circumstance was he to go against his uncle's will."

"And then he went to live at Little Fenn," said Loretta, smiling now, but with traces of emotion. The mere pronouncing of the name of her home seemed queer to the girl in this great room, with its air of remoteness from everything at the Islands.

"Yes; that was before you were born. It was from your father my brother bought Little Fenn. I don't know what his idea was in making the purchase, unless it were to provide himself with a place of retreat when the world tired him. Loretta, very few men could have felt as he did. Nothing would have induced Ken to marry George's widow; and yet the shock of it all changed his whole life. Kenyon went, as you know, back and forth between this place and The Fenns. When do you remember him first?"

"It seems to me *always*," said Loretta, quickly, and with very happy eyes. She stood up, and came nearer to Kenyon's aunt, kneeling down at the old lady's side, a delightful feeling of sympathy with one so near to her husband thrilling her through and through. "One day I remember so distinctly. Mr. Blake had me on his knees. We were on the shore, waiting for Thompson's boat to make the turn around by the Cove. Kenyon was coming, and Mr. Blake said, 'Some day, Loretta, you will be Ken's wife and go sailing away in that boat with him.' When Kenyon came I remember I asked him if he would take me."

Mrs. Dolliver's silence would have been impressive to almost any other observer than the one before her. She laid one of her slim old hands upon Loretta's shoulder, and looked earnestly into the girl's deep eyes.

"Did you always expect that, my dear?" she said, gravely. "Were you surprised when Kenyon asked you to marry him?"

"Oh, no," said Loretta, quickly. "He had not been very much at Fenn, you know, those last two years, but we often spoke of it,—Mr. Blake and I. Now I am perpetually wondering how it came about so naturally,—why he told me so little of—things—life—here,—why the people I meet in Boston seem to know him so much better than I did."

But Mrs. Dolliver's attention seemed to have wandered. She leaned back in her chair, and, folding her hands, looked so grave and thoughtful that Loretta felt as if her being there was an intrusion. From somewhere down the corridor a clock struck, and Loretta, going back to the fireplace, counted ten.

Mrs. Dolliver roused herself. "My dear," she said, smiling at her companion, "you and I must say good-night now. I have put you into Kenyon's old room up-stairs. It is just as he left it the day

before he sailed. He and Angus Loring brought a quantity of things down here, and they spent a couple of hours packing and unpacking."

Loretta remembered suddenly that Angus had bidden her search in a certain box for some brushes left there by mistake and which were of special value to him. "You'll find them in Kenyon's room," he had remarked,—“I rather think in a tin box in the little corner cupboard.”

Loretta was thinking of this while Mrs. Melbury was summoned. The good-nights were exchanged, and Loretta found herself being led down the hall and up a wide old-fashioned stairway, thence to a room facing westward.

Mrs. Melbury began lighting candles, and keeping up a little ripple of talk which it was evident would gather force on any encouragement; but Loretta was eager to be alone, to look about her; and at last, with a final hope that “Mrs. Blake would sleep well,” the good woman departed.

For a moment Loretta stood still, taking in a swift impression of the generous width and air of old-fashioned comfort which characterized the house, so far as she knew it.

CHAPTER XV.

EVEN this careless survey of the room seemed to have brought Loretta face to face with much that was strongly personal in Kenyon's life,—at least what she had now come to call his life, since she recognized the days or weeks or months he had spent at The Fenns as moments not to be counted as heart-throbs. Signs of his eager, active spirit were in the various adornments of the room: his guns, the flag that his father had brought home, an eloquent fragment, from the battle of the Wilderness, some battle-scenes in engraving, portraits of historical characters who had fought for some special cause,—these objects six months before might have puzzled the girl, but now she moved from one point to another, observing all with great interest. It all spoke to her as significant in his life of what was enthusiastic, daring and done by one man for the love of his brother. It seemed strange to her that she should have gradually awakened to discover a new Kenyon. How, thought the girl, smiling sadly to herself, how could she have thought him so long a man of indifferent tastes and feelings? But in fact she had never asked herself of what kind or make he was. She had simply and entirely loved him.

It might have been eleven o'clock when she again remembered Loring's request, and went to the cupboard near the chimney-piece to search for the box where the pencils and those specially dear brushes were to be found. It was a large tin box, and Loretta carried it to the table in the centre of the room when it was opened, and lifted out a mass of papers, to discover the brushes, just as Loring had explained she would find them, but the papers slipped from her grasp in replacing. They fell a scattered mass near to the wood fire, and Loretta went quickly down upon her knees to save some of them from the flames.

Only a few were scorched, and these she was hastening to put together in their proper shape, when her own name written in Kenyon's hand on one of the letters startled her, naturally enough, into a closer inspection, for might it not be, thought the girl, joyfully, some letter from him to her which had never been received?

She opened it carefully enough, fearing that the scorched edges might prevent her reading every word, but after the first three lines there was no danger that the meaning would seem obscure or the written sentences ever fade from her mind. For, one of a pile which had been tied together, it was the letter which long ago Kenyon had written down at Little Fenn and had given on that misty evening into Captain Thompson's keeping.

Had it come to her months ago,—had Kenyon asked her to be his wife yesterday, when this world of his had stretched out its arms to fold her tenderly in its embrace,—Loretta thought she could have borne this so much better. She could have told him bravely enough to leave her and go whither his inclination led him. The girl, seated on the hearthstone, with the letter rigidly held in both her hands, read and reread the cruel lines. Nothing seemed real,—nothing tangible: of the facts that the wind had risen and that the fire was burning low she was utterly unconscious, sitting there as she might sit holding in her hand the mask of the face of one whom she had called a loving friend. It was not in her nature to know jealousy, yet there was a wild passionate outcry in her heart against the woman who had advised him, who had forced her into this cruel fate; and yet *she* was his wife, and whatever might have grown dull or lifeless in her love for him, strangely, pathetically enough, sprang up now as it fled away, revealing to her what seemed in the silence of the night too horrible to bear,—the fact that at no moment of her life had she loved him so wholly and entirely. Days later, even, the girl could look back to that moment and think of how it all confronted her as suddenly as a revelation from the future. Why was it that this cruel emphasis needed to be given to make her see how completely Kenyon Blake seemed part of her very being? No chance of happiness ever again with him seemed even remotely possible at the time, and the barren future confronted her, mocking her for the love that she had given, for the pledge that she had sworn, for the loyalty to Kenyon, for every word and thought to which she could find a clue which had sent her so far forward into what Loring called her awakening. The candles that Mrs. Melbury had lighted on the dressing-table cast but a faint glow throughout the room; but of what consequence was light or darkness to this girl sitting crouched in the shadow of the fire-light, since her thoughts were already away off in stretches of sunny lands, where her eyes, which seemed to have concentrated all the pain that came surging from her heart, could see the tall well-knit figure, the spare olive-tinted face, the dark eyes which had looked at her so many times throughout that winter? and while the very horror of her discovery hung about her it seemed to Loretta as though the sunshine of the plain where he and other comrades were lying might be filling all this shadowy room with its own light, and as though, looking into that far-off country, she could feel the fathomless beauty of those great dark eyes looking

straightway into her own. Could it be that no message from her own might be made to reach them? Could it be that, however far away in person this man might be, he could not *feel* the story that she had to tell him? When, a moment later, flinging herself upon her knees before the couch, Loretta said, audibly, "Oh, my love! my love!" it seemed to the girl as if away off from a break in some pass which he might be climbing, from some hill-side on which amidst the din of battle he might be standing, her voice, all tender, all piteous, all pleading, must reach his ears. Never before for one instant had the girl comprehended how she loved him; never before for one instant had it seemed to her that tragedy might be going hand in hand with the joyous expectant life she had been leading. It was not possible to ask herself just then what else she could do but cry out into the voiceless night that she was his wife, even though never again on earth they should see each other face to face.

The candles burnt down and flickered. Loretta, moving like some one in a dream, conscious that her limbs seemed to drag wearily beneath her, lighted another candle, and carried it back to the fireside, where she sat down again mechanically, taking up the packet from which this awful letter had made its way. Whether she was right or wrong, whether they were hers to read or to leave, the girl never for an instant asked herself. She opened them seeking some clue that should help her towards the course of action most fitting for her to take, but when she had begun to read she went on, regardless of any motive, carried on by the letters themselves, by the one desire to know why and where they had been written,—why there had come a time when they had been laid away.

There were three of them in a woman's handwriting at odd times. The rest were Kenyon's. These three, which the girl took first into her hands, bore dates so widely apart that they must have been preserved for some special reason. The first one had only the date September 10, 187—, and the writer began with no special address: "You did wrong to leave here to-day, for we have been fairly revelling in what nature has to show us, and when we were tired of roaming about, Arcadian fashion, what do you suppose we did? We climbed up the little hill near Mt. Barnard and asked admission at Madame Vaubray's door. You have never seen what she calls her chalet. It seems to me at once the most sensible and most fascinating of country dwellings. The old woman found it out years ago, a common little farm-house, which she has turned into a picturesque dwelling so simple that one is minded to eat bread-and-honey on the small square veranda, where she actually has her tea-table set on nights when the sun is going to make a fine appearance in departing. There is a small parlor, which Madame calls a *salon*, and which is entirely draped in a pretty chintz, the comfortable sofas and easy-chairs being of the same material. But the special point of attraction is her piano, drawn out well from the wall; and this evening we played, she and I, alone or together, everything you would like to have heard. Mr. Meredith had his violin, and became quite inspired when we put part of the Ninth Symphony up before us. I wondered all the way home, and am wondering still

while I write to you, what it is that makes musical interpretation and emotion so utterly different from any other power or feeling in the world. I sit down to play, and presently, behold, I am no longer Margaret Chetwynde, but simply part and parcel of the music that is flying from my fingers. It places me in altogether a different state or condition of being, and the nervous strain or tension has a fascination about it so far beyond my powers of description—certainly those of analysis—that I demand of you, who know everything, what does it mean? why does it affect my life and hundreds of other people's, and yet have no power whatever in other souls, which are awakened doubtless to all that is fine and high and suggestive even in the spiritual side of existence? Still more inclusive is the feeling when I listen to music that I love. Coming home, since the night was divinely starlit, I kept repeating to myself that the stars were singing unto Him. Those far-away lamps of the Most High seemed to me capable of carrying out my thought about the music that was filling me, of bearing it on and on, an endless pæan of perfect song, until it mingled with the voices of the 'choir invisible,' and it was, I am very sure, the music and that only which made me stand for a time with Angus Loring on the ridge near to our little place, look up into the sky, and feel as though it might be peopled with all the images of things done or undone in the world. I could fancy in one trail of cloud the melancholy movement of some dead-and-gone opportunity, some moment of life wasted. In the fine, clearly-pointed light of a very distant star seemed to me the concentration of some best energy or power within us. Is this all enthusiasm of temperament? I think not, since I am very sure that it goes as deeply and securely into my—as you call them—'Christian beliefs.' You know that, dearly as I love the word, I like 'Catholic' better. Were I called upon at this moment for a commonplace hard definition of my creed, you would find that nothing about it appealed to me in any imaginative or romantic way. Frederick Faber wrote, as you know, verses of the tenderest and most imaginative quality, and yet from the pulpit in the Oratory he could define the faith, which he lived to assert, in sentences as logically practical and clearly defined as ever Manning's were. All this, if you please, monsieur, to defend myself from the charge of letting my sensibilities carry me away. Do you know what hour it is? Just two o'clock. So much for music and an impulse to write to you. At the same time, I rather fancy I should have sat up in any case until this time of the morning, since I have two uncut magazines and Prosper Mérimée's *Letters*. Mérimée comes in well—does he not?—after Robertson's *Life*, and the most beautiful and pathetic story of a young French priest, Paul Vennard by name, who joyously laid down his life for his Lord. A story reached me from an unknown hand the other day which you must read, I insist. It was called 'Mary Benedicta,' and is so absolutely true to life, and so natural, in spite of what most of your people would call the absurd fanaticism of the heroine, that if there ever comes a time when we cannot talk about anything in heaven or upon earth it will give us a fine opportunity for discussion. As a story it enchants me."

There was another letter, evidently from a town in France. The

first page was missing, and the second began abruptly: "We failed, of course, in getting the model we wanted. Somebody with Fortunatus's purse had appeared and carried her away, and, after listening to her old grandmother's audacious lies and apologies for some ten minutes, we went in search of some less captivating creature, and found a peasant-girl with the strangest sort of expression. She could not have been more than sixteen years of age, and yet her eyes were those of a broken-hearted woman. G—— thought she would compliment me, I suppose, by saying that my eyes resembled this child's: however, she added, very good-naturedly, 'I hope the day will never come when that expression need be in yours.' In the course of the sitting, the girl, who proved most successful as a model, informed us that she had gone through various horrors during the Franco-Prussian War. You may fancy that I was interested in all this; and do you know, my friend, that it turned out that you and MacIntyre when he went in search of you slept in the very barn which was the last bit of a home those precious Uhlans of yours left her family? The girl, who was in reality over twenty, gave us a graphic picture of that wonderful and memorable night. It seemed so odd to me to think that she had made the soup and the bread that you and little MacIntyre must have devoured so eagerly; and she told me, furthermore, of your going out in search of some poor wounded soldiers away up the road, she carrying the lantern. One of these was this girl's lover, who lay mortally wounded while her hands served you and your comrades. You see, it is hard for me to keep a certain bitterness of tone away when I think of her face and voice and remember that her very callousness seemed the result of all the tragedy she had witnessed. But I liked to think of you as ministering to those poor lads, some of whom had died with the words of home silent upon their lips. You, it seems, cared for her lover,—wrote a letter to his father for him,—were, so far as she knew, the bearer of some little treasure for those he had loved at home; and you saw to it that she had every privilege of guarding him in death and of burying him with some token of respect. Do you intend, I wonder, to go often out into the world as chronicler of its saddest, cruellest events? I beg of you, come back with us in the summer, and settle down at Mayridge, where you can write your book and see the country ripen and the harvest come, and go with none of these marauders of the world to blot it out."

Only one more remained; and Loretta, who had read on and on, now and then giving vent to something like the sob of a child as she drew her breath, turned to it as though it might have been a message left her by some dead hand.

There could be no doubt that it was written here,—here, or in Mayridge anyway,—for Mrs. Dolliver was referred to as having just said something, and the picture of John Brown, and the arrival of a landscape by Gifford, "which makes one for the moment think that all fine effects in sky and shore must be marine," were noted. And then the writer seemed to have been left alone a day which she devoted to the library. "Such a wild, windy morning and afternoon! The rain seemed, however, to have a direct method in its madness, which was to

drench the flower-beds,—to make all those sweet old-fashioned blossoms bend downward, the lady's-slippers and the sweet peas droop, and what I always call the court beauties in that old-fashioned strip below the terrace look like affrighted and indignant maids of honor. Everybody was away for the day: so I divided my time between hunting up all the old memoirs I could, and getting myself thoroughly drenched, as I once heard Angus say, in the 'patch and powder' period. I only needed a volume of Præd or of Frederick Locker to make my condition complete. It was so fascinating to sit down on the floor before the book-shelves and draw back the little green silk curtains to find one's self face to face with the small volumes, Lady Mary Wortley's Letters, in no less than ten tiny brown-covered books, to be in the midst of Lepells and Herveys and of the Dorothys and Mollies and Susans of a hundred years ago,—and then, just as I was beginning to feel somewhat disheartened at the lack of romantic background, socially speaking, in our own history, to lift my eyes and confront that solemn figure of John Brown, who seems to me forever and forever reminding me, when I am here, that our nation has proved itself worthy to have its history handed down as an example and legacy of honor for all the world to come. I own to being far more interested in my own rather childish recollections of the war than in even those stories of the Revolution which your aunt Dolliver can furnish so entertainingly as told by her mother. I liked, for instance, to-day to look at the John Brown picture and then shut my eyes and let my thoughts drift back to the time when all our actions seemed to go to the accompaniment of the tramp of the soldiers' feet, and the excitement and interest of the place seemed to be about those groups of boys in blue, who were either going or coming, and when there seemed but three colors in all the world to care about, and those red, white, and blue. All of which brings me to think that I ought to tell you how bravely it does seem to me those Southern cousins of yours, along with many others, are behaving. I do think that in the developments North and South since the war we have all of us reason to be proud. However, I am not writing you a Fourth-of-July oration. I am writing at the library-table; it is nearly twilight, and the rain is reduced to a tender little patter, above which the flower-gardens seem to have risen with defiant bloom, and, best of all, Angus and Bella Loring have come down for the night, and Angus is at this moment importuning me to come and sing that 'Come, Dorothy, Come' and 'Bid Me to Live' which were your last contributions to the Dolliver music-rack. Where are you and how are you now? I must go in a minute, for already those two people have begun to tantalize me with Dorothy. Wherever it may be, my friend, you know that in my prayers daily I ask always that it is safely in God's keeping."

How long a time had passed while Kenyon's wife read these letters, which somehow showed her more of his past, told the story of his own letter more thoroughly, than volumes might have done, she could not tell. She sat still, with the loosely-opened packet on her knees, and, putting her hands up against the side of the oaken fireplace, leaned her cheek wearily upon them. This, then, was the woman whom he loved; this was the one who for some strange reason had bidden him to marry

her. That she was the girl with whom Loretta had talked so eagerly but a short time since seemed the only unreal part of it all. She took no thought of the fact that she had seen the girl,—seen her in bodily presence. The musician to whose strains Valsati had so eagerly responded—the girl with the quiet, high-bred face, the soft gray eyes, and the sweet voice, with whom she had spoken—might have been a myth or a delusion; the woman who at different times, during several years perhaps, had written Kenyon the letters now in his wife's hands was an actual, forcible, cruel reality.

Loretta's hands moved back and touched her husband's letters,—the ones which for some reason had come back to him, and which a brief glance showed her were written to the woman who had so completely absorbed his life long ago; yet, strange as it may appear, she would not for worlds have opened one of these further than to glance at the address on one of them. She held them in her hands as she might have held some hidden treasures of his past which she had found long after his death; but, after sitting thus, thinking, thinking, thinking always, she moved, and with tremulous fingers tied them carefully together. It seemed to her that she was a long time in replacing the papers in the box, locking it, and putting it away; and when she had done so she came back to the table, and stood mechanically counting over Loring's brushes and pencils, wondering vaguely why he wanted them, wondering how they came to be there, and wondering if anything in all the world would ever seem of use or worth her caring for again.

The first faint lines of the March morning had begun to show themselves in the horizon. Loretta recalled in a lifeless sort of way a vigil she had kept, it seemed now, years and years ago: had she not said to herself that day that her life had just begun? and now—and now, six months later, she was telling herself that it was ended. The dream that had made The Fenns so beautiful to her that night had come and gone,—had swept away, leaving her only with a sense that the realities of life had been learned and that its illusions had faded.

There came across her mind a strange impulse to go down-stairs again to that very library where Margaret Chetwynde long ago had written,—to look about it,—to see it, if possible, as Margaret and Kenyon had seen it, with her own eyes.

There was light enough slowly filling the hall and the staircase to guide her as she went down. The stained-glass window facing the library door was filled with the first of the ruddy beams, but the great room itself was full of gray lights,—uncertain tones that soon enough would break into the splendor of the morning. Loretta paused on the threshold, like some strange visitant of the room wherein so much of Kenyon's young life had been passed. If we could see all the unexpected, unknown, and chance movements of those we love, their impulses born of feelings which are perhaps far stronger than any shown to us, what sort of verdict should we render? Loretta, Kenyon's wife, standing in that door-way, was like some fulfilment of a future he had half shunned, half courted, and then wished that he could have flung away forever. Tangible, sorrowful, strangely pathetic as the figure of this drooping, sad-hearted girl was, yet her action in coming to the

room seemed even to herself fantastic; for she had come to conjure up that past of which she knew nothing more than the letters had been able to reveal to her, and as she moved slowly through the shadows of the room it seemed as though the presence of Kenyon's early love must be there,—must face her as she stood by the writing-table, must bid her lift her eyes to the old hero or put out her hand to those fascinating book-shelves.

But Loretta made little movement. For some reason which she did not try to define or explain, she could not have touched one of the books about which Margaret Chetwynde had written; but she turned at last to the portrait of Kenyon's early manhood which hung in one corner of the room. Loretta leaned her hands, almost as if for support, against the frame, and the sobs came now quickly and heavily. It was impossible to look longer at anything like this. Better be up-stairs again alone with the shadows of her own misery, with what visions of that country near the Bosphorus she could summon up. Better seek him with the eyes of her soul and mind than look at this presentment of what he had been when Margaret Chetwynde loved him.

The glow of the morning did not reach Loretta in her own room, but she liked the gray lights better; and there, kneeling in the window just as she had done at Fenn so long ago, the words of the old hymn struggled hard to come back to her through the chaos and tortuous complication in her mind. The words "Where loyal hearts and true" seemed clearest. With these upon her mind, the girl lay down, worn out with this second vigil of her life, trying to sleep, or at least to check the tears that rolled down beneath her closed eyelids.

CHAPTER XVI.

MISS BELLA LORING was given at times to saying that conscience was a mere matter of discrimination; that is to say, that it was just how you happened to see things and feel them,—the savage, for example, having no sentiment about disposing of his wife and children by the promptest method, or, let us say, about preferring no garments at all to those introduced by the eager missionary.

"So I suppose," Angus remarked to her on one special occasion,—the morning after Loretta's long day at Mayridge,—"that when you stick to the truth you do it from no stirrings of the inward monitor, but simply because your discrimination leads you to prefer the truth to falsehood?"

"Well, supposing that is the truth," said Bella, "doesn't that answer the purpose just as well?"

Angus, who was painting in a very laborious manner, while his sister occupied the end of the sofa in his studio, leaned back and regarded her with an absent-minded smile.

"What do you suppose Loretta's view of this sort of thing would be?" he asked.

"That is just what I was coming to," said Miss Loring. "I want

to find out what that girl's guiding principles can be. She goes directly to the root and heart of things, and her results when she has thought anything out for herself are at times almost sublime."

"And you want to know," said Angus, dryly, "how much of all this is that girl's deep-rooted Christianity, or her sensitive conscience, or her fine faculty for discriminating?"

"I never put it into so many words," said Bella, "but I want to know whence it comes. In some respects she is precisely on a level with Donald, and in others she is far beyond either you or me."

Angus painted on in silence, until his sister inquired,—

"How do you suppose she has got along with that old woman at Mayridge?"

"I can't imagine," he answered. "Mrs. Dolliver's selfishness may not seem so apparent to Loretta, because she regards Kenyon in the light of so exalted a being."

"Do you suppose," said Miss Loring, "that Loretta and Kenyon Blake will ever understand each other on earth?"

Angus started. "My dear Bella!" he exclaimed. "What do you propose for them to do?"

Bella looked down into the fire, with all the scoffing gone from her face.

"I'm not quite sure that I know," she replied, suddenly standing up, "but—let me confess to you, Angus—there have been moments when I almost hoped—that—he never would come back."

Angus Loring's face became scarlet, and a queer look came into the man's eyes. His sister went on:

"One day we were talking of him, and Loretta exclaimed to me, with one of her sudden bursts of emotion, 'I often tremble when I think of Kenyon's coming back. I have nothing but my love to offer him; and suppose——'"

"But she stopped there," said Angus.

Bella nodded. "Yes, she stopped there. Of course the pause was the significant part of the sentence. As I interpreted it, it meant, 'Suppose he didn't care for that.'"

Loring flung aside his brush, and, thrusting his hands into his pockets almost roughly, began to move around the room.

"I wonder if we have done her any good," he said, "or how it is all going to end. For, Bella," and the young man looked at his sister earnestly,—“you will keep this to yourself, of course,—that's just the abominable part of the whole thing: he won't care for her; he doesn't care for her: he didn't even when he married her. Something lies back of the whole thing,—further back than you or I, perhaps, can ever penetrate; but there have been times when, looking into Loretta's honest eyes, I have felt that I could go out and hang myself for having been a sort of conspirator against her happiness. It is pretty hard work," he added, with a queer smile, and looking his sister straight in the face, "to be satisfied, not with having made a blunder of your own life, but with being stupid enough to let another blunder go on under your very eyes without so much as trying to put out a saving hand."

Bella remained thoughtful a long time, and she had scarcely uttered

the words "I can't help believing that it need not be *all* misery," when there came a light knock at the door.

Loring called out a gruff "Come in," and the portière was drawn aside by Loretta herself.

She had contrived to take an early train from Mayridge, and had brought her white, drawn face, the consciousness that her whole future might have to be resolved upon at once and forever, directly to Angus Loring. Not that she for an instant intended telling him Kenyon's miserable secret; but she might confess herself so anxious to return to The Fenns, might admit herself so unhappy, that Loring's counsel would be of service. In any case, the girl's coming had been almost mechanical. She had found herself that morning whirling over the country which had looked so beautiful the day before, but which seemed to her now all a confusion of browns and pallid greens, seen sometimes with aching eyes, sometimes through a mist of tears which welled up but were quickly cast down again to the depths of her heart. It had been comparatively easy to bid Mrs. Dolliver good-by and betray nothing more than evidences of a headache. It had been possible, moreover, to take an earlier train than the one determined upon the day before, and on reaching Boston she had no hesitation about ordering a cab and directing the man to drive her as quickly as possible to Mr. Loring's studio.

It was as though some pale shadowy ghost of the girl had risen to answer all that was dismal in the conjectures of Angus and his sister; for nothing seemed to suggest, in this pale woman who might have lived through years of life since they had seen her, the Loretta who had left them radiant and light-hearted the day before. And even her commonplace excuse of a headache and a tired feeling, which she made almost before they spoke, did not explain her outward appearance to her friends. But, sick at heart and in body, with a sensation of trembling about all her limbs, almost too weak bodily to cross the floor of the studio and sit down by Bella's side, Loretta never before had been so resolute or fixed in purpose. She must go down to The Fenns at once, no matter what plans Dr. Maynard might have made. She would go alone; or she would ask him to accompany her. All of this Loretta made as clear as possible before the trio went back to Mrs. Bailey's house for luncheon, to find Dr. Maynard prescribing a trip to The Fenns for Donald, the whole atmosphere being so full of friendly good humor that Loretta was forced into a sort of smiling assent or sympathy with the things about her, and it happened that the morning passed and the decisions for her going down to Little Fenn were made with no opportunity for private conversation with either Loring or his sister.

Loring's expression at the luncheon-table was completely puzzling to the family assembled there. He had learned to be so observant of every change that crossed Loretta's face, every movement of expression which indicated that she wanted to be helped or cared for, that it baffled him to find her face now so entirely a blank. For there was none of the sweet joyousness or the pretty pensive manner which had made her almost as charming a companion when silent as when speaking.

Luckily for Loretta's sake, Mrs. Bailey was in one of her "general" frames of mind, as Angus scoffingly called it. She had been to a meeting of a literary club, and her conversation would have been quite delightful had not three at least of the assembled party felt something strained and anxious in the atmosphere. Loretta sat facing the doorway of the dining-room, and finally Angus contrived to understand, from certain anxious glances in his direction, that she wished to escape as soon as possible, and, smiling, suddenly he asked her whether Donald did not particularly wish to see her.

It was almost as though he had relieved her from a physical pain, and as he looked at her again he saw that there was something very near to tears about her eyes.

"Oh, go, of course, my dear," said Mrs. Bailey. "You must come to the club some time with me." And, her generous glance taking in Dr. Maynard's whole personality, as it were, she added, "Really, Dr. Maynard, I think the day is not far off when we shall create something like a *Salon* in this country. We are so rich in material; and yet we cannot learn to concentrate. I suppose that is it."

Loring was only half conscious that he said, in a stilted fashion,—

"We never can do it until we have a few more generations back of us. What epigrammatic person was that you were telling of, Bella, who remarked that we are only creating ancestors now?"

It showed how close was the sympathy between the Loring and Loretta Blake, that without a word brother and sister had a tacit understanding that Loretta was suffering mentally. Bella, answering in a rather superb way that "people are always saying witty things nowadays," rose from her chair and let Loretta pass swiftly by, the luncheon-table at Mrs. Bailey's being so informal that there was no further need of explanation.

But out in the long hall, among the old-fashioned but luxurious objects, all of which had grown dearly familiar to the girl, Loretta stopped for a moment, and, leaning against the balustrade of the staircase, turned to look at everything about her, conscious that she might be bidding it farewell. Down through the hall she could still see the table which had at first so surprised her, since Mrs. Bailey's dinners appeared to be a sort of means towards conversation. Should she ever see these friends of her newer life gathered about it again? She could see Mrs. Bailey's fine impressive figure, and the beaming face which always suggested the perpetual kindness of some fine old portrait, and Bella looking at Dr. Maynard with the gentlest sort of courtesy. Loretta took in every detail of it all. The fascinations of the place that she was leaving seemed for one moment to flash across her mind and make her either doubtful or cynical about her own position in the world; but it was looking last at Angus that brought her back to the simpler, more natural, and finer emotions of life. Never had his face, with its shrewd fine lines, seemed kindlier; and she knew that his gray eyes were on the door-way through which she had just passed. How many of these silent farewells are taken! Would it not almost seem, in the face of their fine feeling, that words are the idlest parts of our existence?

CHAPTER XVII.

IF to be incapable of any emotional variety in life is fortunate, Mrs. Lyons was certainly to be envied; but common sense was almost unduly developed in the good woman, and on receiving a hurried telegram from Dr. Maynard that he was bringing Loretta home again, nothing occurred to her as necessary to be said or thought about it, beyond the fact that Phoebe had to be directed to air the rooms which Loretta had occupied in the house at Little Fenn, and to see to it that Captain Thompson brought over from the Main some articles of diet such as the girl must have been indulged in during her stay among the Bostonians.

Mrs. Lyons had been an invalid more or less during the winter; but invalidism of her sort is one of the commonest and dreariest features among the Fenn people, who accept it with entire resignation, and grow thin and pale with a cough, or a disordered digestion, or a worn-out back, without the slightest inclination to make much of themselves or to see their diseases in an heroic light.

"She ain't took to her bed," Phoebe Sparks would say to herself from time to time, watching for the moment to come when her companion would give way so far as that; and meanwhile the array of well-advertised quack medicines grew larger in the store-room closet, and what vitality Mrs. Lyons might have possessed was day by day being sacrificed to them.

The two women, of course, had made Loretta the subject of most of their conversation during the winter. They could not possibly form any picture of her with her new friends, and Loretta had not indeed attempted much that was descriptive, but they knew enough to expect a change in her. To begin with, her clothes would look very different. She was likely, as Phoebe put it, to seem more "pearl" than when she went away; and the school-teacher at Old Fenn, who was a bright girl from Fielding's Point, came over sometimes of an evening to discuss such questions with the two elderly women, her experience of ways and manners on the Main giving a certain flavor to the conversation.

Whatever financial arrangement Kenyon had made with Dr. Maynard, it was well known that Loretta's income was an ample one, and out of it she had done everything in her power to make her aunt and Phoebe comfortable. To none of them had there seemed the slightest sense of obligation in receiving from Loretta anything she chose to send, and the question of taking Kenyon's money had not arisen in his wife's mind as a doubtful one until this very moment. But as she made the journey, still dreary and mechanical in mind and body, down to Little Fenn, the thought of what she could do now with her husband's fortune drifted back and forth before her mind, and took certain shape at last. A sort of revulsion from employing it for her own personal needs had come to the girl, but might, she realized, pass away: meanwhile, there were other things which she could do, and which would certainly result in pleasing him. She had discussed with Dr.

Maynard the idea of Mrs. Dolliver's foreign trip, and expressed herself positively as against joining the old lady in it.

"I want to stay *here*," Loretta said, as she and the doctor were seated in the sail-boat that took them to The Fenns. "I don't know yet what I shall do with myself, but, whatever it may be, it will be here. I have thought a great deal about going to Europe, but I believe that I shall in reality feel nearer to Kenyon down here at home."

Dr. Maynard agreed with this, in the same fashion that he had gone on agreeing with everything Loretta had said since her return from Mayridge. There were certain things about the girl which startled and bewildered him, and, above all, this sudden development of self-will or power of decision, before which he yielded as unquestioningly as he would have admitted the fact that a flash of lightning above a field of daisies and buttercups was as powerful as though it had occurred while he was traversing a macadamized road. Not one word had Loretta said of her discovery, as yet, to the good old man; but when the boat touched at the landing in front of his little cottage first, and he was about leaving her, she turned to him eagerly, with a glance which showed him something had been weighing on her mind, to say,—

"Can you come across to Little Fenn to-night for a while? or shall I come to you to-morrow?" She paused a moment, and then added, decidedly, "To-morrow will be the best. I will come, doctor,—if I may,—about four o'clock." And a moment later the boy who was managing the boat, and who had been stricken as with a helpless silence by the sight of Loretta's changed appearance, was making slowly for the wharf of Little Fenn.

Loretta turned, facing the island, with her heart beating almost to suffocation. She had not dreamed that the sight of these familiar shores, the stretch of sailless water which she had crossed just now, the outward look of things belonging to her past, would affect her as they did. It was not happiness in any way. It seemed to the girl all a sickening sort of misery,—a shame, a sense of something like ignominious failure with which she was returning to Kenyon's home. If only she could cry aloud and say something of this terrible burden pressing upon her! But there was not alone the reticence of years to contend with, but the fact borne in upon the innermost fibres of her soul that she must not betray Kenyon in any way save to protect him.

When Loretta had been very young,—a slip of a girl going to the old school-house and enjoying many an evening with old Mr. Blake during Kenyon's visits,—the young man had once said to her,—

"Loretta, there is one thing about you I don't know how to understand. You have the greatest obstinacy of any human being I ever knew."

And old Mr. Blake had interposed quickly: "What are you talking about, Kenyon? What do you call obstinacy in the child?"

And Kenyon had laughed lightly, and answered, "Well, it isn't obstinacy. I suppose it's loyalty. I verily believe, Loretta Gardiner, that if you had ever cared about an old stick or a stone you would go on caring for it until you were in your grave."

And, to the amazement of both her companions, Loretta had nodded brightly, and said,—

"If you wanted to care for it, you could in the grave and long afterwards just as well; because whatever I love here I mean to ask God to let me go on loving there." A remark which it is highly probable the Loretta of these days would have made with the same simple sincerity.

The garden, the stone walk, and the steps, as well as the outer aspect of the house, had all been changed, and for the better. Phoebe Sparks, standing in the door-way, experienced a certain pride and self-satisfaction in having such a house for Loretta to return to; but every other feeling on Phoebe's side was merged into one of surprise and admiration at sight of the young mistress of the place making her way up the zigzag path, and had it been possible to carry Mrs. Lyons in her arms to the door to witness this spectacle, Phoebe would gladly have done it. But Mrs. Lyons saw it for herself in an instant. Loretta, after a hearty hand-clasp with the old woman, hastened through the hall and up the staircase with swift feet to her aunt's room, and in the door-way the thought of the night that she spent beside her adopted mother when for a brief time they had allowed themselves to show each other what their hearts felt came back to her, and made it easy to kneel down beside Mrs. Lyons's easy-chair and put her strong young arms tenderly about the worn figure, kissing brow and cheek and lips, and half crying and laughing together.

"Well, so you're back, are you?" Mrs. Lyons contrived to say, and, putting her hands upon Loretta's shoulders, she looked eagerly into the girl's sweet face. "Well, Loretta Blake! I do declare!—Phoebe Sparks," she called out, trying to be very matter-of-fact, "just come here and see this, will you?" And, as Phoebe was heard coming slowly through the hall, Mrs. Lyons's eye swept over Loretta, taking in every unfamiliar detail in her niece's dress and general appearance. "I don't see but you're rather pale," she said, with her old accent of contempt, "and you've lost flesh, too. But there!—Phoebe, just look at her, will you? Here's Loretta come back again as fine as a new fiddle. How long do you suppose we'll keep her?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

"THEY'LL all be wanting to see you, Loretta," Phoebe Sparks remarked, as she took Kenyon's wife into the room that had been carefully and lovingly prepared during the day. The well-remembered ornaments of her childhood, the carefully-arranged table with a keepsake and an album and a showily-bound Bible upon it, suddenly surprised Loretta into something like a laugh, and she turned, revealing a face to Phoebe that made the good woman sit down and exclaim,—

"There, now, you do look something like yourself, and I don't see as Boston *has* done you so much harm."

Loretta was standing before the chimney-piece, her hands resting upon the little black-painted ledge.

"Did you think it would hurt me, Phoebe?" she asked.

"Well, there is no tellin' what ever happens when you go from home, and often and often we've said to each other this year how much you must miss the real comforts of home. There was a time we thought of sending up some good cake and pie, or something of that kind; but Thompson wouldn't take it,—said no such stuff was needed."

Loretta had been laying aside her things and listening with a queer sense of reality and unfamiliarity to what Phoebe was saying. The girl's ear had always been keener and quicker, so Fenn people were wont to say, than anybody else's, and yet never before had it occurred to her how much voice and accent can do.

"Yes, Phoebe," she answered, smiling in a gentle way; but it was disheartening to feel herself in a certain sense removed from the kindly parts of Fenn life.

Phoebe planted her hands upon her knees, and stood up, saying,—

"Well, guess you'll be ready for your supper when you can get it. I'll look around and see for the best we can do."

When Loretta had made some slight changes in her dress, she stood for a moment in the window, her hands locked together, while she asked herself what had really brought her back to the Islands, and she knew that it was an instinctive feeling that Kenyon ought to find her there, ought to see her among the people he took her from, and there was a craving, perhaps, for the peculiar restfulness of the place. Of one thing she was certain: nobody here would trouble her with questions or explanations. There would be no lack of interest, but there was little or no curiosity to be developed among Fenn people. Loring had declared that they were too well bred to care for the events in the lives of the people beyond their waters. And the fact that Loretta had been absent would be certain to make them treat her with a more gentle courtesy, if possible. No one on the island ever demanded speech if silence seemed preferable. Half a dozen men or women might group together and sit out of doors on a summer evening or in some friendly parlor, without feeling the least necessity for speech, yet a cheerful sociability could prevail.

That Loretta's apparent depression of manner came from anything mental or specially startling and perplexing in her life never occurred to either Mrs. Lyons or Phoebe. Phoebe in the kitchen was saying to herself that she needed something stronger than the sort of "fixin's" over at the Main, and for this reason Loretta was treated to the very finest fish that could be found.

"If she don't like that," said Phoebe, "we may just as well give up. I'd call anything else only fooling."

By the time tea was over, Loretta, who had stationed herself in the window of the sitting-room, beheld signs of unusual animation on Old Fenn. Several people were on the shore, in various stages of readiness for departure in half a dozen different boats, and, in spite of the wind that had arisen, these small barks made their way across to Little Fenn without much difficulty, the tossing up and down being to Fenn people

as natural as sitting in their rocking-chairs at home. Phoebe Sparks, who hovered near Kenyon's wife with a little flutter of pride and admiration, was delighted by this spectacle.

"There, see!" she exclaimed, every wrinkle of her honest old face showing pride and delight. "I said they'd be over the first thing to see you, Loretta. You didn't know Sam Hexam was married? No! Well, after all, he has married that Verona Jackson: poor thing!—shouldn't wonder if he buried her soon. Folks say the school-mistress took it considerable to heart; but Verona she was in love with him years ago, and she'd 'a' broken her heart if he'd thrown her over. There, they are landing now."

It was dusk, but the people who had come to pay their respects to young Mrs. Blake knew their way well enough up the craggy walk, and presently Loretta found herself going out with Phoebe to the door-way, receiving Samuel Hexam and his wife, her aunt's sister-in-law, Mrs. Sharp, and various other old friends from the larger island.

Sam's marriage had seemed to reduce him from the picture of smiling content Loretta remembered to something dogged, if not sullen: his wife was a consumptive-looking girl, thin to attenuation, with a homely freckled face, scant yellow hair, and of so faded an appearance generally that it would seem as though she counted only as a pale shadow in the life about her.

Hands were extended with more or less shyness, but with the usual air of good breeding which characterized the Fenn people. The figure of Kenyon's wife, tall and beautiful, with her new air of dignity and sweet self-possession, must have occasioned surprise in the minds of those old friends now before her, but not so much as by a quiver of an eyelid was this betrayed, and Loretta found it easier to go through these first greetings than it would have been to enter a drawing-room in Boston with Mrs. Bailey and Bella Loring or even Angus himself at her side.

Not but that she felt the contrast between her old life and that which she had just been leading was emphasized almost painfully in these first few moments, but she observed now what had never before occurred to her as remarkable,—that the Fenn people had reached a degree of civilization by instinct which in some people she had seen Loretta felt sure was merely a matter of education.

"We've got her back, you see," Mrs. Lyons said, when she was assisted down-stairs to receive the guests. "And she looks pretty well, doesn't she?"

"She does," said Samuel, permitting himself the luxury of a laugh. Dead silence followed this, but all countenances were friendly. The visitors had been ushered into the sitting-room, which still retained the adornments Loring had sent down, and Hexam and his wife took their places carefully on the sofa, with a peacock screen Bella Loring had selected for a background. Captain Thompson and his niece, an anxious-looking girl, were among the company, and he alone seemed to have anything speculative or questioning in his gaze.

"War's a terrible thing," said Mrs. Bartlett, suddenly, looking across the room to where Loretta was standing talking to Mrs. Sharp.

Mrs. Bartlett was the mother of the children with whom long ago Kenyon and Loring had found Loretta seated on the rocks. The children were with their mother, and they clung to her skirts timidly, regarding Loretta with a sort of uncertainty which was more than the girl could endure.

"Yes, war is pretty hard for any one anywhere," said Loretta, in her clear tones; but the reluctance of the children to approach her occupied her more even than the conversation, or Mrs. Hexam's pallor, or Captain Thompson's shrewd observation. Could these children see a change in her that was repellent? Loretta answered Mrs. Sharp's last remark hurriedly, and went over to Bobby Bartlett, kneeling down at his side.

"Come, Bobby," she said, in caressing tones, "I do believe you have forgotten me! And little Lorrie, too! after being my namesake! You must come with me a little while and make friends again."

Mrs. Bartlett gave the small Lorrie's hair a brush backward and pushed her towards Kenyon's wife.

"She's got a spell of shyness on her," said the mother, who herself felt more or less overawed by Loretta. "I say sometimes I wish I hadn't chick or child to bother with, and then, again, seems as if I'd pine without 'em."

Loretta, who had her arms and hands fully occupied with the two little people by this time, looked up at their mother and nodded and laughed. Later Mrs. Bartlett sat down at home to tell them how very handsome Kenyon Blake's wife had grown,—“like a picture, I think,” the good woman said: “her eyes looked as if she had something going on in her soul all the time.”

"I should think you *would* pine, Mrs. Bartlett," said Loretta, "if these young people were to run away. Now see what good friends we all are again."

She led the children to a divan which Loring had cushioned comfortably, and there they seated themselves, still eying Loretta cautiously, but evidently with a more friendly feeling.

"Bobby shall come over to-morrow, and we'll go and take a walk," said Loretta, eager to put herself back into the old traces.

"And Lorrie must stay at home," announced this typical brother.

"There!" cried Mrs. Bartlett, with something like a touch of pride in her only son and heir. "That is the way he does: he's got to be first or nowhere."

"Lorrie shall come, of course," said Loretta, laughing; "and if we sit on the rocks I'll hold her in my arms."

The face of the small Loretta broadened into a smile. "And put a shawl all over my head," she said, tracing a pattern with one chubby finger on the sleeve of Loretta's gown. "I remember how you used to do it."

Loretta's heart seemed to stand still for a moment, but she answered, tranquilly enough,—

"Yes; I'll hold you just that way, and tell stories about—about a little boy I knew in Boston."

The rest of the company began to show now by various movements

of feet and hands that they must leave, but Mrs. Lyons and Phoebe pressed them to remain, and Loretta joined in the demand, recalling suddenly that this was a primary law of Fenn hospitality; and it occurred to her also how entirely kind they had all been, even in their reticence: not a question that could hurt or startle her, not a word or a look that could embarrass her. The timidity of the children alone showed her that to them as well as to herself she was changed.

She crossed the room to where Sam Hexam's wife was now sitting alone, and tried to induce her to talk a little. But Verona never remembered Loretta like this. True, she had always been regarded on the island as different from and superior to the other girls; it was understood that her family belonged to the Main, and old Mr. Blake had always made a pet of her and seen that she got the best teaching that could be procured; but this self-possessed, queenly-looking young creature beside her now made Mrs. Hexam afraid of any powers of conversation she might call her own. She smiled faintly when Loretta asked after her health.

"Oh, I guess I'll get along," she said, shyly. "I am taking a bottle of medicine Sam got over at the Main, and I do' know but it's doing me some good."

The girl's pale-blue eyes were fixed earnestly on Loretta, whose bloom had seldom seemed so apparent. The traces of her mental suffering had not vanished, but beside this frail-looking creature Kenyon's wife seemed to have the vigor of a young Hebe.

"You're looking pretty well," went on Mrs. Hexam, admiringly. "Why, it don't seem, Loretta, 's if it was you, someway." She laughed nervously. "I am glad to see you," she added, and put out one of her thin hands to touch Loretta's. The slight action was enough to make Loretta suddenly realize how stifled in certain ways life at The Fenns could be for such as Hexam's poor little bride. She closed her own hand warmly about the girl's.

"I shall see you very often, I hope," she said softly. "I am going to stay here, now, till my husband comes home."

"That sounds pleasant," replied Verona.

The voice of Captain Thompson suddenly pervaded the room. "I should say," he remarked, in a well-kept guttural, "that these Rooshians had done all the fighting that was good for them."

Hereupon two or three voices arose in argument, and, to Loretta's great astonishment, she found that the Turco-Russian war was almost as well understood on The Fenns as in Mrs. Bailey's drawing-room. Indeed, it may be that the point of view held by the island people was more direct and conclusive, since they exercised very little of the imaginative faculty in criticism or discussion. It is possible that some of the Russian generals would not have recognized their names as pronounced by Fenn people, but the work of different campaigns was clearly understood, and the geographical part of the question had been reduced to a nicety. Loretta wished that Angus, Loring, or Bella, or any one from the household she had lately left, could have been present; and it seemed to her the more remarkable since during the winter-time communication with the Main was rather difficult and newspapers were by no means

easy to obtain. But it served to show Kenyon's wife how thoroughly interested these Fenn people had been in her marriage, and how clear-headed most of them were. Very few among the younger ones could recall the civil war, and as a matter of fact the Fenn Islanders had but the meagerest sort of patriotism, events in the United States occupying their minds but slightly. The fact that Kenyon Blake, whom they had known ever since he came down to Little Fenn an active dark-eyed lad of ten years, had gone into the very thick of a war was enough to suggest an interest in the question; and that the scene of action was near the Danube or before Plevna occupied their minds as anxiously as though it had been just across the Main, since remote countries to The Fenn people were in effect as near as Boston or Washington might be.

The political discussion ended almost as suddenly as it began, and the guests declared with settled intention that they must be leaving. Accordingly, they trooped out, Phoebe Sparks and Captain Thompson carrying lanterns, and presently Loretta, who had conducted her aunt up-stairs, heard the splash of oars and the sound of voices on the water dying away in the distance. She exchanged her wool dress for a loose garment, a soft white thing with lace about it which had been Bella Loring's selection, and came back to assist her aunt in getting into bed. Mrs. Lyons looked at this apparition of Loretta in mute surprise.

"Why, Loretta Gardiner!" she said, slowly. "What in the name of sense have you got onto you?"

Loretta laughed, came nearer, and let the prim little lady put her hands on the folds of white wool and the creamy lace.

"It's only a sort of wrapper, Aunt Liddy," she said, in a fond tone, glad to amuse and interest Mrs. Lyons so easily. For an instant her mind sped back to the nights she and Bella had sat up in the latter's room, thus attired, talking over all the events of the day and evening. How easily she had fallen into the ways of that household! how soothing its air of complete satisfaction in all its surroundings had been!

"A *wrapper*!" Mrs. Lyons leaned back in her chair with a contemptuous sniff. "Where's Phoebe Sparks? There she comes. Just let her see what the folks up to Boston call a *wrapper*!"

Phoebe's step was sounding along the corridor, the gleam of her lamp lighting its dark corners. Mrs. Lyons's open door revealed Loretta in her "wrapper" before Phoebe entered; and if Mrs. Lyons had been anxious to surprise her old companion she ought to have been fully satisfied. For Phoebe stood still, with her face suddenly fixed in an expression of absolute delight. Some ancestor of this ancient woman must be held accountable for Phoebe Sparks's love of the beautiful. There was unalloyed admiration in the way she surveyed Loretta's tall young figure in the flowing wool gown, her hair loosely falling on her shoulders, and in the fairness of her face that touch of something new to old Phoebe which had puzzled her from the hour of the girl's return.

"Stuff like that for a wrapper!" said Mrs. Lyons. "Did you ever see such a thing, Phoebe?"

The older woman came in and set her lamp down, paying careful attention to the chimney before she spoke.

"I remember a cousin of my father's," she said, critically, "who had a thing something like that. It was pink. Well, I can't say but what it's a beautiful kind of a dress, if it ain't fit for a wrapper."

Loretta laughed, and asked her aunt if it would make her more comfortable to see her in a little jacket such as she used to wear at home.

"Oh, fiddlesticks!" said Phoebe, suddenly. "Why should you change your ways? If you've been wearing things like that up to Boston, don't you go and run down *here*."

With this expression of opinion the old woman took one more grateful survey of this changed Loretta, and departed, her intense satisfaction showing itself in the way she hummed or chanted a sort of tune going down to her own room.

Loretta made her aunt comfortable for the night, as she had often done before in one of Mrs. Lyons's "spells" of sickness, but she observed how much weaker the poor woman was than she had suspected. It was agreed that they should leave their doors open, and Mrs. Lyons was to call upon Loretta if she needed her. The simple incidents of the evening, the calm or commonplace of the home to which she had returned, helped Loretta more than she was aware of until she lay down to sleep. Strange faces seemed then to haunt her pillow. The sad eyes of Verona Hexam came back to her, confused with some thoughts of that older Kenyon whose story seemed now to make the only tragedy of Little Fenn. But the evening among her old friends had suggested possibilities unthought of when Loretta left Boston. The Bartlett children seemed to be asking her to infuse something bright and joyous into their young lives. Verona's impulsive touch of her hand, slight as it was, seemed a claim upon the womanly sympathies which were springing into life within Loretta's heart. Surely, thought Kenyon's wife, as she lay still in the darkness of her first night at home again, surely there was something here for her to do. Why had it never occurred to her before? Could it be that she had served her apprenticeship in the outer world in order to bring back something like new life and animation to the people of her girlhood? And then suddenly it came over her, almost with a sense of physical pain, why she had found it hard to understand Kenyon, and as well what it was he had found lacking in her.

Had Loring known her thoughts, he would have told himself that the Psyche had returned awakened.

CHAPTER XIX.

DR. MAYNARD'S house on Fenn had for its prospect a curve in the shore, and, in a comfortable hollow, Captain Thompson's boat-house, and his "second-best" boat, usually turned sidewise for investigation or repairs, the captain being given to close consideration of his boats

when not actually on the water. Beyond this warm spot of shore-line rose the old warehouse in which the store was situated, and thence ran out a small peninsula, rocky, and perhaps disastrous to careless walkers, but considered by many Fenn people a very agreeable promenade. This was the final extension of land on the island; but following the main road past the doctor's house there was a sharp hill-side, uncultivated, and barren but for one large patch of pine- and fir-trees. It was characteristic of The Fenns that old Mr. Blake and Dr. Maynard had both been able for years to live their secluded lives on the islands free from any unpleasant intrusion, cross-examination, or discussion; but the doctor's house was regarded by many people as a sort of social centre. It invited hospitality, and it excluded no element in Fenn life which the people enjoyed. The doctor always welcomed a caller; he took a decided interest in the names and ages of the young people. When on the island, he loaned his books and newspapers freely, and when away, as during this year from time to time, he sent daily journals to various people; and yet—a state of things which could have existed only at The Fenns—his own personality was never disturbed or investigated. He might, like old Mr. Blake, have lived and died there unmolested by one curious or intrusive person.

The house itself was of stone, differing, therefore, from some others along the road. There was a small patch of garden in front, tangled with old-fashioned flowers in summer-time and warmed by two fir-trees in winter. The door-way opened into a small square hall, with a spidery staircase leading only into an attic; for the doctor's sitting-room, bedroom, and kitchen were on the ground-floor, and his old servant slept in a neighboring house, coming daily to minister to her master's very simple wants. The sitting-room commanded the view above described, and so conveniently that the doctor by opening his window might converse with Thompson when that worthy chose to be communicative, or he could see the main road up and down for a distance which included the angle of Little Fenn and some windows in the Blake house.

The sitting-room was capacious enough to be library, parlor, and dining-room in one, and the doctor encouraged evidences of the two former, since he liked to cheat himself into a belief that he had very comfortable and home-like quarters; but Loretta, entering the house on the day after her return to The Fenns, was struck by the loneliness of the room she had thought quite a paradise of comfort a year ago, and the doctor's figure turning to welcome her seemed out of place, with its air of kindness and content, in such barren surroundings. There was one capacious easy-chair, and there was a blazing fire on the hearth, and the blue-and-white curtaining in the lower windows and an old-fashioned escritoire produced a good effect in that portion of the room; but the upper part was shabby, and unlike what Loretta fancied the doctor would enjoy.

The girl came in fresh from her walk down the road, with quite a color in her cheeks to balance the dark circles about her eyes.

"I have been looking for you for a full hour, my dear," said the doctor. His friendly accents had a faint tinge of compassion.

"So many little things came up to do," said Loretta. "You know Aunt Liddy is very weak; and Phœbe liked to have me from time to time in the kitchen."

She sat down as she spoke, loosened her long wrap, and leaned her head back wearily.

The doctor, as was his habit when thoughtful, began slowly to pace the room.

"Loretta," he inquired, "do you really mean to remain at The Fenns until Kenyon's return?"

Without moving her head, Loretta let her eyelids express that it was so.

"But Mrs. Dolliver's plan, of going to Europe?"

"I have written to her to-day," said Loretta. "I brought the letter across, hoping to induce Captain Thompson to take it to the Main. Dr. Maynard, I could not go to Europe—now."

"What is the matter?" He came over to the chimney-piece and stood still, looking at the girl's figure in the old chair, a pang striking him as he observed its lines of dejection.

"I mean to tell you," Loretta answered, hastily,—“at least part of it; for some help—human help—I must have. I have prayed and prayed about it; but there are times when we need a friend's voice and counsel here, are there not?” The doctor showed his sympathy, and Loretta went on, sitting upright and clasping her hands tightly together: “I don't know that I need say much about it, only I have found out that Kenyon—Kenyon married me for some reason,—*not* because he loved me.”

She rose and walked over to the window, her face, pale and miserable, averted from the doctor. But, before he could answer her, Loretta went on hurriedly, turning back again as impetuously as she had left him:

“I cannot think what it all means. But it is true. I do not want to pry into his life. I want to hear whatever he has to say from himself first. This I have made my mind up to do. Perhaps you could tell me the whole story,—I am almost sure Angus Loring could, or Bella,—but I will not hear it. I mean to live my life here as well as I can until he returns, and then I will ask him if he wishes to go away again, or to tell me anything, or to explain anything.”

She was standing near the old man now, looking at him with a fixed gaze.

“I know I was not what he thought. I remember a great many things now, and I am sorry for him with all my heart; but, I keep saying to myself, why did he do it?” She put her hands to her eyes and forced the tears back. “It would have been so much easier to tell me he did not love me,—to let me live my life here as I was doing.”

“Loretta,” the doctor exclaimed, “listen to me: I think I know something of Kenyon's life that you do not——”

The girl stopped him by an imploring gesture. She put her hands upon his arm and leaned her head down upon them wearily.

“No, no; not one word. I want him to know I never listened to a

syllable except from himself. The day I came up from Mayridge I was desperately afraid that Angus or Bella would question me,—would tell me something I did not wish to hear."

"My child, my child," the old man said, as tenderly as though she were his very own, "may I not ask you some questions? How did you find this out?"

Loretta started back and looked at him pitifully.

"Then you know it to be true?" she said, almost whispering the words. She had in some recess of her heart hoped the doctor would controvert her opinion; but his face sent her last doubt to the winds.

"I cannot tell you," she said. "I ought perhaps not to have come to you with this much. But I felt I had to speak of it; and you are the only one; and I want you to help me."

"For anything I can do, you know, Loretta, that I am at your service." The poor doctor felt helpless as a child before the misery of this girl whom he had loved so tenderly and for whom he had hoped so much. But with every word she uttered he felt more and more that the woman in her had developed; the wife was asserting herself, and he could not venture to penetrate the silence she had reserved to herself.

"I mean to make something better of things if I can," the girl went on, "but it is terribly hard. I have thought a great deal about it all, the last few days, and—do you know?—a queer feeling has come to me that perhaps it is not intended that all of us should have happiness for our portion, and if we make mistakes that involve responsibilities we must bear them,—must help each other with whatever is hard in them. How do I know but that my lot in this world, my way of working out my salvation,—and perhaps his too,—is to take all of this as part of the discipline of life? I don't mean to give up or feel cowardly if I can help it. Only sometimes it seems all misery that I love him as I do! I know now how much Kenyon must have missed in me. Tell me,—try to think and remember,—what was I like when he married me?"

The remembrance of that July evening long ago rose to the doctor's mind and blotted out all other objects for a moment. When his eyes came back to Kenyon's wife standing before him, he was startled by the change time—or, had he but known it, the depth of her love for Kenyon—had wrought in her. The shy though fearless, trustful girl whom Kenyon had married might have been a faint picture or foreshadowing only of the pale, beautiful woman before him now. In her eyes there seemed to be a sort of challenge to the future, a passionate demand for what it was her right to wrest from life, the exchange for the heart whose every pulsation counted as a thought of the man who, it seemed to her, had so lightly pledged her to himself.

"Not what you are now, my dear," said the doctor, gently. "Loretta, listen to me, and let me speak to you. I do not believe Kenyon thought, after all, that you cared for him. You have been away among other people. You know what life at The Fenns is like: no one ever stops to think what they *feel* or *are* or *might be*. It is a place entirely devoid of any thought of what one might call possibilities ahead. But from the time you were a little child I always saw that you were different,

and I longed to see you take your right place in the world ; and so Mr. Blake and I used to talk of Kenyon——”

Loretta, who had resumed her seat in the deep easy-chair, started suddenly.

“You too !” she exclaimed.

“I know what you mean,” the doctor answered, quickly. “You feel that Kenyon was urged to marry you. We will not discuss that, my dear. Only I always knew you needed but to have your heart awakened to know what you were worth,—what you could do. You were quiet enough,” added the doctor, reflectively, “but there was always that repressed energy.”

“And it is only six months,” said Loretta, drearily, “and I have learned so much !”

“You were ready for the lesson,” said her old friend, gravely. “And now, Loretta, remember one thing : you are Kenyon’s wife. There is nothing for you to do but to make the bond stronger, firmer, holier. Whether he returns next month or next year, you are his. You belong to him.”

She raised her eyes with a mute inquiry to his face.

“It may be as well,” he went on, “that you have returned here. You have some money at your command. You have learned what you can make profitable to others. Your new vitality can be given out to those around you. Try to forget whatever has been morbid or unwholesome in all this ; and, Loretta,”—the doctor paused a moment, looking earnestly into the face lifted to his,—“simplify everything. Don’t torture your soul with doubts and wonderments. If you have made your mind up to hear nothing about Kenyon’s life except from his own lips, then wait with womanly patience. You have work to do almost at your very door, and there is no surer refuge for those whose hearts are aching than in toil for the benefit of their little world.”

The doctor was silent for a moment, and then added, with a sigh,—

“But I suppose it is easy enough to talk.”

“You help me,” said Loretta, quickly. “I felt as though it was all drifting, somehow. So many things have been crowded into my life, you see, and now, now that this thing has come, I feel as if I have to make definite decisions. But it is better for me to be here ; and when Donald comes down I will be happy.”

Dr. Maynard held out his hands, and Loretta’s were quickly laid within them.

“It will be all right,” he said, composedly. “Loretta, I never have had any doubts of your capacity even for suffering ; and you see things in a clearer way than you know.”

There were voices at the door. It had been pushed open, and in the hall-way Loretta saw unexpectedly the figures of the two little Bartletts. They stood still, hand in hand, regarding Dr. Maynard and his guest with unsmiling fixity of purpose.

Loretta started up. “I forgot the children,” she said, smiling through a mist of tears. “I promised to take them for a walk. And Sam Hexam’s wife,—I must see her too.”

The children ventured no farther than the threshold, but Loretta

said good-by hurriedly now, and the doctor promised to go over to Little Fenn as soon as possible.

"We are going to see Captain Thompson now," said Loretta, as cheerfully as her voice would permit, and giving a hand to each of the children. "I have a letter for him."

They had relapsed easily enough by this time into their old view of Loretta as a companion and ally, and were contented to go along at her side down the little strip of shore to where the captain might be found in his boat-house. His actual residence was on a windy corner of the road; but in the boat-house he kept a fire, some provisions, and a bunk, in order, as he sometimes explained, to feel himself at sea now and then,—marine life being all that he recognized as a lawful occupation. In old times he had seen as much as any man who ever set sail from New Bedford; but rheumatism had driven him to seek a more sheltered existence, and he had long been known as The Fenn messenger, carrier, express-man,—in fact, permanent link with the Main. However, it was all a matter of inclination when he crossed to Fielding's Point, and he frequently examined a customer who wanted a letter or a parcel carried over or one brought back as to the merits of the case, sometimes insisting upon having the letter read aloud, or the package opened for his inspection, making his decisions with the air of a judge who liked impartiality but was driven by the force of things to be critical. There was no reason why a rival boat should not have been started, except that, as Dr. Maynard remarked, the tendency of Fenn people was not in the direction of "possibilities."

Thompson was in his boat-house as Loretta and the children approached. When she was a child the place had acquired a fascination for Loretta which lingered still,—the same that might attach itself to the idea of a caravan or a peddler's wagon which was convertible into a temporary abode. The windows were high and narrow, and showed little flaps of red curtaining; and when the captain's fire glowed, ruddy streaks enlivened the shore, and there would issue forth odors of fried bacon, and perhaps of coffee; and on entering by the three little steps the captain was to be discovered in the narrow place, with these home-like suggestions about him, the walls decorated with prints from illustrated papers of a remote date, and the ceiling festooned with queer objects, some of them nautical, others of the purely domestic hardware character.

He was sitting on a bench now, engaged in mending a sail, and, if such a thing were possible, I would say his face brightened visibly at Loretta's approach. He made a place for her and the children, and waited for her to speak. The letter was in her hand.

"If you can get it across to-morrow morning, it will do, captain," Loretta said, and, from force of habit, added, "It's to my husband's aunt in Mayridge. She wanted me to go to Europe with her; but I thought it wiser not to do so."

The captain looked at her shrewdly. "You stay where you are," he said, in a tone meant to be kind, if firm, "and you stick to it."

Loretta smiled, but colored faintly. "I will," she answered, and looked as if she would like the captain to give his reasons.

"You stick to it," said the captain. "You're a—well, you're a new woman, I tell ye. There's nothing you ain't fit for now. You're up to any of 'em,—up to anything he'd like to see; and you stay here and stick to it. Yes, I'll take that letter, if I feel like it, in the morning."

CHAPTER XX.

A COUNTRY railway-station, however secluded and dignified a village it may belong to, has invariably its knot of gossipers and people given to speculation about matters in general, from forecasts of weather to remarks about local visitors and their motives. Subdued as this element was in a place like Mayridge, it yet existed to an extent sufficient to warrant an animated discussion one August morning over some events in the Dolliver family. The Boston express was on its way, and it was well known among the gossipers that Mrs. Kenyon Blake might be expected in it,—the fact that her husband had arrived the day before, stricken with fever, being already a stale piece of news.

"As I remember him," a tall man with a careless manner and a shrewd eye was saying, "he was forever in some scrape or other. And going off among those Russians! That's the Blake blood, though! George—this one's father—was the same."

"Old Ken warn't," put in an aged individual very comfortable on a barrel, who gave the impression of waiting for events by rail as a matter of duty and occupation in life. He scanned the track up and down with a familiar glance. "Old Ken was a steady-going man until he took it into his head to go off to Maine somewheres. I wonder how the old lady'd take it if Kenyon Blake never pulled through this?"

"Oh, he will," said the tall man, in drawling contempt, "unless the doctors kill him. He's one of your wiry, tough kind."

A distant whistle smote upon the air. The August morning seemed to vibrate with it.

"There she comes," said Rufus Spaulding, the man on the barrel. The pronoun was inclusive. It was interesting to the little group to welcome the train, but to see Kenyon's wife might be tragic. The news of Kenyon's arrival stricken with illness had flown about Mayridge as though the birds of the air carried it. Those who had seen the sick man tenderly lifted from the train and carried to the Dolliver house had reported the spectacle with 'bated breath. Those who heard of it remembered all their dismal prophecies when Kenyon had gone away a year ago; and the fact that Mrs. Dolliver was still abroad—Kenyon's return having been merely for the purpose of taking his wife back to England with him—served to intensify the public interest. Report stated—and correctly, as it happened—that Kenyon had insisted on being taken from Boston to Mayridge, and that the young wife down at the Fenn Islands had been telegraphed for. No direct information was to be obtained at the Dolliver house, except at the outer kitchen door-way, where a young housemaid, who could be communicative when

she chose, was given to studying the weather as a means of escape from Mrs. Melbury now and then.

Loretta occupied a compartment with Bella Loring in the train that was speeding so fast to Mayridge.

"I thought it better *not* to go and meet him," she was saying, explaining her apparent neglect for the twentieth time. "Oh, Bella, it is all very cruel!"

Miss Loring considered that many things in life might be readjusted, but she disliked to hear Loretta accuse herself.

"You were doing just what you felt right," was her answer. "Which of us can do more? Not the wisest, not the most pious of us! And your Fenn work was so absorbing."

Loretta's cheek flushed. "That ought not to have kept me," she said. "It would not. The school is all right, and Aunt Liddy tolerably comfortable. Bella, it was *pride*. I believe in my heart of hearts it was pride."

As Loretta had never made an admission of the kind before, or said anything that would suggest that such a sentiment had been provoked by Kenyon's course, Bella looked at her with alert inquiry. But Loretta said no more. She turned her face towards the window, watching the fleeting landscape, recalling the day she had come down here in the pale springtime,—recalling also, with a dull pain at her heart, the day she had returned alone.

Angus was in charge of the invalid. Bella had waited in Boston for Loretta, who came up from The Fenns, arriving that morning. Bella knew enough of the people among whom they were going to feel sure the faces at the *dépôt* when they arrived would reflect something of Kenyon's condition, and when the train slackened speed she began to search nervously for signs of what might be expected; but curiosity partially veiled and entirely kindly was the only expression on the faces of the loungers, and Bella swept Loretta along with her to the Dolliver carriage, where the first words from the servant in waiting were "About the same, miss," and in an instant they were driving over the smooth, well-kept country road, past gate-ways and fine lawns, to draw up in a few minutes at the white house Loretta felt as if she knew so well.

Emotion, sentiment, dismal conjecture, all these seemed to the girl now idle things, merged into the one supreme feeling that she was about to see her husband, doubtless on his death-bed. She was scarcely conscious of Mrs. Melbury's welcome; she knew that in Mrs. Dolliver's old room she laid aside her hat and light summer wrap, Bella in anxious attendance upon her; that Angus appeared in the door-way and spoke to her; that she was told Kenyon was unconscious, but that the doctor was waiting to see her. The staircase seemed endless; the long corridor above, with its cool matting and shaded lights, did not look familiar; and Angus led her to a door at the end of the hall,—*not* into the room where she had kept that mournful vigil long ago. Whatever Angus had contrived to say to the doctor, it had been arranged that Loretta should go into the room alone,—should for a moment at least see her husband with no other eyes upon her.

"The doctor will see you in a moment," Angus said, in quiet tones. "Go in, Loretta. Perhaps Kenyon will wake and know you."

The door was ajar, and Loretta, laying a soft hand upon it, went slowly into the half-darkened room.

He lay there apparently asleep,—the man whom she had loved all her life, for whom she had waited with a proud sort of patience, and to whom she was bringing the most loyal heart that man or woman ever knew; and that he had no power to speak or to respond to any word or look of hers filled Loretta with a compassion that seemed almost deeper than her love. The pale face upon the pillow, the dark hair tossed back, the eyelids closed heavily upon the eyes that she had pictured waking or sleeping so many times of late, had a pathos that made her, kneeling down at the bedside, almost cry aloud that *once*—just once, if no more—there must be a change; Kenyon *must* look up at her, must see her, hear her, be conscious as she was of that intensely living, breathing, vital thing, her presence. But Loretta knelt on, gazing at her husband's face in silence. There was no movement in the lifeless figure. She might look and look, feel every heart-beat pulsating with but the one desire, and yet it would be useless. Now and then a long-drawn breath showed her that he was living. She put her face softly down against his, and, holding it there, she stretched one of her strong young arms about him. She had pictured their meeting in so many ways!—had thought of him sailing across from the Main,—coming up the craggy walk,—looking at her,—speaking to her,—explaining to her. Darkness had never checked these fancies. The vision of Kenyon's return had been always luminous, but there had been moments when, springing from her bed at night, she would have to walk about her room, forcing herself into calm about it all; yet daylight had come bringing the same feeling with the sunshine or the rain, the mist or the gloom of winter. In and out of all her many new occupations at The Penns but one thought had haunted her: How and where would they two meet? And it had come now! She was beside him, but in a way she had never dreamed of. It was almost to Loretta as though he had returned poor, friendless, and alone; and, holding him in her arms in that first moment of their strange reunion, every sense of bitterness or reproach of him drifted away. God had sent him back to her. He lived. Hope need not yet turn to despair. It seemed to the girl that with her arms about him, with her eyes forever on his face, with that continual prayer from the one heart that needed him going upward hourly, she *must* be capable of holding him to earth! Loretta's frame shook with sobs that could not reach the vent of tears, and yet in it all was an undercurrent of passionate delight. He had come back to her,—whether for an hour or a day or forever,—and at least for this moment of time she need not show him anything but her love. Might it not be that God meant he should stay a little time tenderly in her keeping and die without the knowledge that she knew he had deceived her? Woman's love and trust, her loyalty and her tenderness, it seems to me could go no further than Loretta's carried her in that moment of mixed misery and joy.

CHAPTER XXI.

No warfare ever can be like that of life fighting against Death who conquers with disease. The silence of this grim battle-field, the tension, the stretching out of some hours into endless repeated seconds, each one accented with new power to pain, the dragging on of other times when the uplifted finger of suspense may point either to life or to the last entrance into the Valley of the Shadow,—who among us but has counted some such drear campaign? Who but has known the wounds given on that field of warfare? Death-scars they may be, not to be healed until they are carried, emblems of the fight, into the presence of the Most High.

It seemed to Loretta in these first days at Mayridge beside her husband's sick-bed that the watch-fires of her very soul were lighted. Not for an instant did her courage fail. Not for an instant did the girl flag in her perpetual hope and watch of him. And her very readiness to take rest from time to time, when possible, showed the fixity of her purpose better than an hysterical endeavor to keep always on her feet, always widely awake. She had to garner strength. Looking at him during the days when he was half in stupor, half lost in wandering, Loretta kept telling herself that some hour of great emergency might come when her whole strength would be needed. The girl's superb physique stood her in good stead: the others looked on in amazement, seeing that her step never faltered, gentle as was its tread in the sick-room, that her arms were strongest to hold Kenyon when he wearied of the pillow and seemed to find unconsciously a comfort in resting his head upon her breast, that her hands were always skilful and firm, yet so softly womanly, and that her voice never showed an accent of impatience or anything that could betray the ache that went on hourly within her heart. A strange feeling possessed Loretta at the time. Kenyon, unconscious of her presence, not knowing whose hand it was he seemed instinctively to seek, not recognizing the voice which they all knew he turned to with a look of relief, not realizing that he rested most tranquilly when her arms were about him,—*this* Kenyon, Loretta would tell herself, was all her own! Anxiously as she prayed and waited for the crisis to be over, there was the dread of meeting in his eyes something which she must answer, the dread of knowing that the love that she poured forth now in care of him must be locked away, hidden, crushed from sight; and if death, as it seemed to be approaching, looked to her like some cruel vengeance, life at times mocked her, or bade her beware of what it might well enough contain.

The days sped or drifted on. The August weather sometimes sent hot rays of sunlight into the room where Kenyon lay, bleached the flowers in the garden, made every blade of grass and every wayside shrub sharply prominent. Sometimes cool evenings followed such a day, and Loretta, with Bella Loring, would steal out into the starlit gardens, and walk up and down, always talking of Kenyon, always wondering what the verdict of heaven was to be. No tension can be like that which comes with such experiences; but the kind of exultant

sense of possession in her husband which made it easier to bear was strange even to herself. Life might bring hours that were tranquil and full of deep content, but could they ever mean as much, Loretta wondered, as these passing ones, when Kenyon's eyes met hers, knew her not, and yet looked for her first among those who tended him,—when, sitting by him, she could hold his hand and feel his fingers close instinctively about her own, or, looking at him, study unheeded and unobserved every line of the strong face, gaunt now with illness, but dearer a thousand times to her woman's heart than it had ever been when vigorous in health? The household was small enough to make all things in the care of Kenyon easy. Mrs. Melbury hung upon every word and look of Loretta, who had been at once recognized as the mistress of the house; Angus Loring left Mayridge only when business actually demanded his presence elsewhere; and Bella remained a fixture, having gradually come to the conclusion that Loretta Blake was her superior in too many ways to make it possible ever again to attempt instructing her, and if she could be of help in odd moments when companionship was needed, Miss Loring felt that she was playing a satisfactory part in life. It was impossible to say how this girl, whom a year ago they had treated so like an unthinking child, had acquired an influence which made her dominate all things about her. Perhaps it was the realizing of this that led Bella Loring to a frame of mind in which many of her old ideals as to what was necessary for life's happiness crumbled away.

As I have said, Bella rarely left Loretta alone in the house; but there came an afternoon when, Angus being absent, some one had to go to Boston on an errand for the sick-room. Loretta declared herself quite capable of being left with the untrained but strong man-servant who was her assistant in Kenyon's room. The morning had been fitful in temperature; Loretta, awake at sunrise, had noted the lurid streaks of light that shot in between lines of uncertain primrose, and when the twilight of the morning was over there was a look of rain, if not actually storm, on the horizon; but Bella went her way, and the rain came only fitfully in little gusts that sent a shower of drops upon the window-panes and gave a passing chill to the air. The doctor had been in twice, and was to return within an hour. He had bidden Loretta watch Kenyon's every movement, for the crisis surely was at hand, and four o'clock found her sitting in her usual place, her hand clasped in his, her eyes fixed upon the roadway she could see from the window. Kenyon had been sleeping; of that she was sure. The house was absolutely silent. Anthony—Loretta's assistant—was downstairs, taking his daily recreation in the kitchen or the garden, but the quiet was not oppressive. Such hours of late had been rare, and Loretta prized them. How soon might she not have to yield her place, stifle her heart-beats, compose her loving looks to those of a studied calm! The roadway that she could see wound like a white ribbon between the dense August greens, and as Loretta sat there every portion of the landscape to be seen was like a picture painted on her mind,—so many days had she watched thus, so unconsciously unfamiliar had it all become. Some carriages went by. Loretta found herself dreamily

speculating as to who the people were within them,—where they were going,—whence they had come,—humanity in general having taken on an aspect as remote as it had recently seemed near. How far away all the outer world had grown!—and yet a month ago people and events at Fenn had seemed to the girl vitally clear and interesting. And then suddenly the fingers clasping hers relaxed, then closed again. Loretta turned swiftly, to find Kenyon gazing at her with full consciousness and life in his glance.

She moved, looked at him, and smiled faintly, but, without letting him see her emotion, stretched her hand out for the medicine the doctor had ordered if he awoke to anything like normal life; and, in the voice which she had not yet heard, Kenyon said, quietly,—

"It is you, Loretta?"

She smiled, and nodded her head at him, skilfully bringing the glass to his lips. He obeyed her, and then fixed his eyes upon her face with the same deep, searching glance.

"You have been here all the time?"

Loretta was standing at the foot of the bed, looking at him composedly, but with her heart beating so madly she could scarcely speak.

"Yes,—ever since the first day."

"How long is it?"

"Nearly three weeks. Is it not better to keep quiet? The doctor will be here soon."

He drew his brows together impatiently. "Come here,—here close beside me."

She obeyed him, trembling in every limb.

"Give me your hand."

She held it out, nerveless and cold. The room seemed to be reeling about her; but Kenyon saw only a quiet woman with beautiful sad eyes and parted lips.

"Hold my hand closely."

She tried to obey him, closing her hand about his and laying the other down upon it.

"It *must* have been your hand." He spoke wearily, and added, in a moment, "Did I not see you here last night?"

Her lips formed a "yes." She tried to speak, and at last accomplished it.

"Yes. I was here." Her hand slid from his. She pressed her palms closely together.

"You put your face down on my pillow. I know that it was you."

There was a silence, and Loretta said, quietly, "I listened for your breathing."

There was a moment's perfect stillness. Would the doctor never come? This was the all-important moment; but it had been almost unconsciously that Loretta refused to admit by one movement or one word that she loved him! Presently the sick man's hand wandered to the gown she wore.

"You had a white dress on before."

"Yes: the weather has been very warm."

He closed his eyes, and at once there sprang into the girl's face all

the passionate love that she must now and forever put away. Good heavens! what was she to do? To spend days and weeks like this, perhaps?—having dreamed of what was life's paradise, to see the gates close before her? But a movement from Kenyon sent composure to her face again.

"It is the old thing, I suppose,—the same fever I had at Bucharest."

"Yes, I suppose so. But, Kenyon, thank God, you are better now. If you will do as we will tell you, it will all be well."

He looked at her searchingly, the depths of his eyes seeming to express that death might not be unwelcome. Something, a strange pale shadow, crossed his face. Every fibre of Loretta's nature thrilled suddenly in misery and dread that perhaps this was the supreme moment of forgiveness and of parting. No after-time could ever hold the agony or the emotion of that moment, as, with a thought that God would be merciful, Loretta bent her face down and laid her lips sacredly upon his.

The silence between them for an instant seemed to stretch out endlessly. Loretta moved back, trembling and unnerved. Something seemed to be stifling her; but Kenyon lay still, looking at her with a strangely searching glance.

"Sit down beside me," he said, in a low tone. "I want to know that you are here."

Loretta's face had grown deadly white.

"In a moment," she said. She had touched the bell without his seeing it, and she stood still, trying to smile at him, but counting the seconds until Anthony appeared; but the footsteps in the corridor were Dr. Paget's, and the next instant he and Angus Loring were in the room.

CHAPTER XXII.

ABOUT four weeks later, Bella Loring stopped her brother on his way to Kenyon's room to say something that weighed upon her mind.

"Come in here," she said, with a judicial sort of manner, and ushered him into her own apartment. "I want to talk to you for a few moments," she continued, "and you may as well sit down and make yourself comfortable."

Angus was in that frame of mind when any kind of suggestion from some one more vigorous than himself would be likely to be heeded. He flung himself into an easy-chair, and signed to her to go on.

"I want to know," said Bella, "whether you ever saw anything or anybody like Loretta."

The question appeared to be superfluous. Angus evidently considered it so; and Bella continued,—

"Now that Kenyon is getting better, she seems turned to marble. It is pitiful to see the way she represses every sign of feeling. She

is always cheerful, always ready to do his slightest bidding, to humor his caprices and his fancies, but—what is it?"

"Good Lord!" ejaculated Angus, "how am I to tell? Yesterday she told me the three weeks before the crisis came seemed to her years and years ago."

"There is something working on her mind. But, Angus, who would have thought the girl you brought up from The Fenns a year ago could turn into this wonderful creature?"

"She was always what she is now," remarked Angus, "only the needed events had not happened."

Miss Loring was silent for a moment, and then she looked up, to say, anxiously,—

"What will they do? She is evidently convinced that he will never care for her."

"She is going back to The Fenns." Angus spoke deliberately. He did not tell his sister that only the day before he had vainly used every argument to turn Loretta from this purpose.

"It must not be. Angus, do you hear me? It must not be. These two have just one chance of happiness before them. I shall talk to Kenyon if it goes on."

"You might warn her not to give him a set-back for a while, but I would not try to argue much with her. She has given me a queer commission."

"What?"

"She wants me to go to Margaret Chetwynde and ask her if she cares to see Kenyon."

Miss Loring's face colored violently. "What madness!" she exclaimed.

Brother and sister were silent for a moment.

"If I do not go, she will do it for herself," Angus continued. "Her mind is bent on seeing Margaret here."

"Oh, Angus!" Bella could say no more.

"Who would have fancied Loretta's developing so much quiet resolution?" he went on. "No wise woman of fifty could be firmer than she is now. Well, I must go to Kenyon. He is waiting for me. Loretta has been reading to him an hour, and the girl is looking terribly dragged lately."

"Stop a minute." Bella put out a detaining hand. "There is another thing. She has begun to take up all her Fenn duties again. She has written to that Mrs. Hexam, a long letter. Dr. Maynard, she tells me, is looking after various of her schemes down there. She talked yesterday of trying to take Mrs. Lyons away for a little change."

"It is all the same thing," said Angus. "Don't you see? he is getting well now, and she means to leave him alone. The fact is——" He broke off suddenly. Angus found it difficult to discuss even with his sister the subtleties in Loretta's character which he had discovered for himself. Bella was watching him with a pair of anxious, tired-looking eyes.

"I suspect," said her brother, laughing unexpectedly, "we're all a little overstrained just now. As for yourself, old girl, you don't look

any too well. Suppose—suppose you were to suggest taking Loretta up to Boston for a day or two. It would perhaps be a good thing,—a change, anyway,—and I can see to Kenyon here. It would emphasize her ideas about the whole thing to be away from him for a little while. Yes, I think, Bella, that is a good plan.”

Bella brightened, but she said in a moment, with some dejection,—

“We can’t plan for Loretta any more. We can love her and take care of her, but she is going to mark out her way for herself.”

“Unless Kenyon does it,” said Angus, as he left the room.

If Loretta looked tired, she certainly betrayed no consciousness of new fatigue. Since the day that Kenyon had rallied, she had kept her place in his sick-room by a supreme effort of will, the self-control being hidden, as she thought, although the complete change in her manner towards Kenyon himself could not fail to attract observers so keen as Angus and Bella Loring. Whatever Kenyon himself recalled of the days during which she had so unreservedly shown her love for him, he said nothing, but he watched her, morning, noon, and night; with the persistency of an invalid he demanded her presence, and it had come about during these days that much of her time was spent in reading to him, or in long conversations the topics of which were all unconsciously guided by Loretta so that she contrived to hear a great deal of his personal experience during the last year and to tell him in a quiet way much of her own life at The Fenns. She was sitting near a window of Kenyon’s room when Angus entered. The book she had been reading was one much talked of at the time,—a psychological sort of novel, brilliant in dialogue and epigrammatic almost to a fault. Kenyon, lying with his hands clasped behind his head, listened sleepily, now and then giving vent to impatient criticisms, which at times Loretta, to his great surprise, contested. But when Angus appeared she stood up with an air of great relief.

“Loretta is glad to get away,” said Kenyon, smiling at Angus. “I don’t doubt I have tired you all out.”

Loretta’s manner had certainly shown an anxiety to escape, but she turned now with a smile for Kenyon.

“I will stay if you like,” she said, quietly.

“My dear child, don’t think of such a thing. I will burden Angus for a time.”

Loretta moved towards the door, and Kenyon’s eyes followed her with a strained look in them. He said nothing until the last sound of her footsteps died away, and then he brought his gaze back to Angus.

“She is worn out,” he said, shortly.

Angus remained silent for a moment, and then gave an idea of his plan for Bella and Loretta’s trip to Boston. Kenyon listened with darkening eyes, but said, in a languid tone,—

“Yes, I suppose it will do her good. When could they go?”

Angus began to be detailed now, and found, to his relief, that it was an easier matter than he had expected to talk of Loretta to her husband. They had hitherto avoided the subject in a certain way, but Kenyon seemed now chiefly desirous of pushing the topic to the limit of Loring’s ability to answer questions or give information.

While his friend talked, Kenyon's mind drifted back to the days of his semi-unconsciousness, trying to piece certain confusing remembrances together. They conflicted with the experiences of the last fortnight in so painful a way that at last he felt driven to believe them the fancies of delirium. And yet it was almost impossible to question the reality of certain moments, when Loretta, in the abandonment of her love and almost despair, had clasped him in her arms, had kissed his brow and lips, his hair, his hands, and prayed audibly to heaven for his release. Her face from time to time glowing and paling with emotion was one of the pictures of that drifting time which recurred now in forcible contrast to the quiet, self-contained girl who showed by no word or look that any sentiment was expected between them. Certain trifles made it the more impressive. For instance, that morning he had said to her, "Where is the blue ribbon you wore about your neck?" and Loretta had blushed scarlet. He remembered it,—connected its pale hue with the face that he had seen in that strange dream-land, and, taking her hand suddenly in his, he had looked at the slim fingers, saying, "You had a queer ring on the other day. Where is it?" Loretta turned the stone around so that he could see it,—an opal with some sparks of diamonds, which Bella Loring had given her at Christmas. These were disjointed pieces in the puzzle; but Kenyon was bent on finding the missing parts.

"Where do you suppose she has gone?" he said suddenly to Angus.

The other laughed. "Not very far away, you may be sure of that. Let me know when you want to see her, and I will find her easily enough."

But Kenyon protested against this. "You know she is tired out," he answered, as though Angus needed a rebuke.

CHAPTER XXIII.

KENYON was up and dressed the next day, and, to the joy of the household, was able to go into a faded little sitting-room which had been during his illness Loretta's place of refuge when her thoughts became oppressive or there was need in her soul for absolute solitude and rest. The room had belonged in days gone by to Kenyon's mother. Whether from indifference or association or dislike of change, nothing had been altered there by Mrs. Dolliver, and it presented to the eyes of Kenyon's wife the same aspect that it had to the Jane Foster of Mrs. Dolliver's tragic story. The room had been for years entirely unnecessary to the requirements of the house. It was not pretty, nor even particularly bright, but there was something which pleased Loretta and gave her a sense of seclusion which at times she liked. Angus had planned to surprise her with Kenyon's appearance in the room when she returned from an afternoon walk, and the scheme was successful.

Loretta came in glowing from her exercise, the dampness of the air having put color into her cheeks and given a soft waviness to the

loose locks of hair upon her brow. She uttered a little cry of delight on beholding her husband. He was not even sitting down, but was standing by the chimney-piece, gazing absently into the long narrow mirror which hung above it. Loretta caught sight first of the reflection therein,—the face thinned by illness, but so dearly familiar in its strong, rugged lines, the eyes whose greeting she had waited for, the lips whose slow curve formed the smile that made the fascination of Kenyon's face composed now. But Loretta's own glance fell: Kenyon turned. A look of great joyousness sprang into the man's face, and he came forward holding out his hands.

"Loretta! I thought you would never come."

She stood still, looking at him with an exquisite shy grace.

"Come here! You are cold after your walk." He possessed himself of her hands and drew her towards the easy-chair he had lately occupied.

"It is my turn to take care of you," he said, a flush rising in his dark cheek, while Loretta continued to look at him with a tremulous manner.

"Oh, Kenyon," the girl spoke hurriedly, but in very low tones, "I am so glad to see you up! Are you really better?"

"Very much so," he answered. He stood still, looking down at her, as though he could not move his eyes from off her face. Loretta was standing near to him, and suddenly Kenyon put out his arms and drew her towards him with a sigh of unutterable content. The feeling of her husband's first caress thrilled the girl to her very heart; but she moved back swiftly, looking at him with a pained, dilated vision.

"Oh, Kenyon! no! no! you must not *pity* me!" The words seemed to choke her. "I know it all. I know that you have never loved me, and now I want to tell you everything." She had withdrawn in a sort of terror from the joy of being near to him, for her story must be told calmly and dispassionately. Kenyon must listen to it all, and then they could both decide the future.

"What do you mean?" There rushed over Kenyon's mind a sickening remembrance of the careless wooing which had preceded his marriage. The girl who stood before him now must recall it all,—must, with her fine developed vision, judge him by it.

"I will tell you," said Loretta, still looking at him, but with compassion in her glance and in her voice. "I know that you married me because you were urged to do it. I know that you thought you were doing right. But, Kenyon, why did you not tell me just how you felt? I should have set you free. I should not have held you by so meaningless a bond as that. And another thing: I came here one day, and Mrs. Dolliver put me into your old room for the night, and I found a letter that you had written down at Little Fenn to——"

"Good God!" Kenyon took a step forward, and sat down by the table in the centre of the room, leaning his head upon his hand.

"A letter to Margaret Chetwynde, perhaps," he said, lifting a haggard face to Loretta's. "It was returned to me, I remember, that last day here. The address was wrong."

Loretta made haste to give him an outline of that mournful night at Mayridge long ago.

"I said no one should speak to me about it until I had seen you, Kenyon," the girl went on, the sweet cadence of her voice reaching him like pitying music. "I would not discuss it even with Dr. Maynard. And now I ask you to tell me, absolutely and entirely, the truth."

Kenyon lifted his eyes, and saw in those of his wife perfect trust, but also a compassion which it was impossible for her to conceal. If by word or deed he had wronged her, thought the man, he called heaven to witness that he loved her now entirely, and that to win from her one response to this new and bewildering passion of his, to win the respect and the sweet comradeship he knew were worth so much in such a woman, he would humble himself to the very dust. But it was not the first hour of Blake's life in which he doubted himself. He looked at Loretta's face, so softly girlish and yet so womanly. He noted with aching eyes every line of the tall young figure, in which pride and dignity were so unconsciously blended, and it came upon him with cruel force that by his own doing perhaps he had lost her forever.

"Loretta," he said, going back to the fireplace and making a supreme effort at self-control, "I did wrong you in marrying you without saying how I then felt. But you are mistaken, dear, if you think that Margaret Chetwynde and I were lovers. I can hardly tell you how it was. Perhaps there was a time when I did feel that we might be something more than chosen friends and the best of companions, but it seems to me away off now in some period of my life I cannot account for. She helped me to think better of many things in life and human nature. I caught the spirit of her finest feeling, and perhaps I helped her with what I tried to be myself. But there could not for an instant have been real sentiment between us, because——" Kenyon stopped suddenly, hardly knowing how even to Loretta he could frame the next sentence; but the girl's eyes demanded from him all that he had to tell,—"because I knew for a long time that she cared for some one else. She had moved me strongly, but not—not in the way a man should feel for his wife; and she was as wise as I in seeing and understanding it."

There was a silence, and Loretta, in a low, constrained voice, said,—

"Angus,—did she care for him?"

Kenyon bowed his head. "What it was that separated them I do not know; for I am certain Angus loved her. We were altogether, up to that time, a happy, light-hearted set of friends; but about the time I went abroad something happened which Angus has not forgiven."

"But you wrote to her," said Loretta, a wave of color dyeing her cheeks, "that you had no love to give to me! And you asked her to write to you. You needed, I suppose, to be consoled for the terrible sacrifice that you were making." It was her one burst of weakness.

"Loretta," Kenyon exclaimed, passionately, "it was so different then! Dear, I did not know you! I think now I must *always* have loved you in my very inmost heart! But then! My uncle had made me promise not to hurt your life in any way. He told me on my re-

turn from Paris two years ago that he had discovered you loved me, and of all women on earth he preferred that I should ask you to be my wife. I heard then for the first time the cruel story of his own life, and it seemed to me that in some way I should be living over again the treachery of my mother if I deserted you. I did not stop to study you or learn what you were worth: I was filled by an idea that there would be a sort of poetical justice—a sort of compensation or balance of things for the part she had played—if I proved true to what you expected of me. I felt as if otherwise an inheritance of deceit would weigh me down. I can tell it to you now, you see, because it seems to me as though the very winds of heaven had swept it all away. I cannot explain it any further to you. Why need we torture each other? Have you not heard enough? Can the present do nothing to soften your heart towards me? Oh, my darling, why need we waste one moment in such miserable questionings? Loretta!"

She had moved nearer to him. By stretching out his hands he could have touched hers, but there was something in her whole look and bearing which forbade him.

"All that I can say," he went on, "is that everything now seems changed. Donald—poor little chap!—wrote me repeatedly about you, and you never knew it. I followed all your life in Boston through the little letters he enjoyed sending in a surreptitious fashion. Many a night I have read and re-read the boy's letters by the camp-fire and thought of you as he described you,—racked my memory to recall the books he said you and he were reading,—pictured you in the wonderful gowns he said you wore,—thought of you with a mad kind of jealousy among all the people who I knew were looking at you and admiring you and perhaps drawing you away from me. Good heavens, child, you do not know what it is for a man to feel as I have felt at times out there, and here,—here since I have been ill and have seen that you only pitied me! I have fancied lately it was my punishment that I learned to love you so madly,—so entirely. But I cannot give you up now. You shall not draw yourself away from me. I will teach you to care for me, dear heart! I will show you what it is to be loved and cared for, to have one human being always thinking only for you. If you were to go from me now to the uttermost ends of the earth, I should find you. I should never rest until I heard from your own lips that you loved me! Whether you were young or old or blind or deaf or dumb, it would not matter: you would be my wife before heaven, and the only woman I have ever loved."

It seemed to Loretta as though the joy of it all would kill her unless he let her make some sign of what was rushing wildly through heart and brain into her very soul!

She put her hand out,—tried to speak: the words faltered on her lips, but her eyes were shining. Kenyon caught their glow. Heaven, it seemed to the girl, was all mercy, God all tenderness and love, to give her even this brief hour of unmixed delight. To stretch out her hands to her husband was all that she could do; but an instant later he had her in his arms, kissing her lips, her cheeks, her eyes, the soft waves of her hair, and beseeching her to look at him and say that she

loved him. The whirlwind of Kenyon's feeling seemed to envelop her, and brought her almost unconsciously to the deep chair which he had bidden her take, and he was kneeling before her now, his arms clasped about her waist, his head upon her shoulder, and his frame shaken with sobs. Could life do more than this for her? And was not this moment worth all the doubt and misery of the past?

CHAPTER XXIV.

ONE soft sunshiny afternoon in July two ladies were seated on the porch of the Little Fenn house, watching with intense interest the distant progress of a yacht which was making for the island with as much speed as the calm weather would permit. It had been remarked of Miss Bella Loring that time made no impression upon her fair good looks; and indeed as she sat in a patch of sunlight, with her head bared to the glow of the afternoon, it would seem that this opinion might hold good indefinitely, since in the three years which had elapsed since the days when Loretta Blake knew her first the only change had been that a certain softness had taken the place of her old half-bored, half-cynical expression; but, as Angus was wont to remark, "Bella would be Bella always, defying time, wind, or weather."

The girl at her side looked quietly out upon the water. Hard to tell what she was waiting for or expecting, since now and then the color flickered into her cheeks, or a sudden spark of light seemed to touch the depths of her gray eyes; but it was easy for Miss Chetwynde to sit calmly at Bella's side, since the latter was ready to express all the animation and interest due the occasion.

"It certainly is odd, Margaret," Miss Loring was saying, "for you and me to be down here in Kenyon's house to welcome them home again. But I confess to having given up the study of life. I simply accept things nowadays and try to do as Loretta does,—turn it all to good account and then go on to the next thing."

"That is profitable," said Margaret, dreamily.

"After you have refused Angus once or twice more," continued Miss Loring, not looking at her companion, but speaking with merciless severity, "you will probably realize that he wholly misunderstood, just as I did, your course towards him. I once thought never to talk to you about it again; but, as I was so much to blame in the matter, it keeps crying out within me. I have been pursued the last few days by an impulse to say just one word more."

"Dear Bella," Margaret Chetwynde turned her face towards the older woman, looking at her tenderly, "I know how well you mean it all. And it is such a comfort to be taken back into your good graces again! Yes, I admit frankly I would have humbled myself very far just for that, many a time before Loretta found me out and explained things. If you could know how wretched I felt over our estrangement! But I wonder if you know how I feel now when I think of renewing the other thing. Angus chose to misunderstand me,—to think I had

led Kenyon on and on while I was pretending to care for him. Well, then I waited patiently and hopefully,—gave him every chance to make things clear, to ask me for an explanation; and it never came. Bella,"—Margaret rose and stood a few paces from the other, looking at her with sudden passion in her face,—“do you know there were times when I should have gone mad for joy, I believe, to think that such an hour as *this* could ever come to me? My faith was so long-enduring, my hope so very strong, and I kept on telling myself over and over again that the daylight *must* come. I tried so hard to blame no one. I tried so hard to make every day of my life contain something that should be done for Angus's sake,—something he would like to know of when he came back.” Margaret dropped into her seat again. She leaned her head wearily upon her hand. “It must have been that I waited too long; for it is dead now. I cannot tell you what a lifeless feeling there seems to be about my heart. It is like something physical.”

The tears were in Bella Loring's eyes. She had talked the question over often enough with Margaret Chetwynde, the girl whom they had so long accused of trifling with Angus and leading Kenyon Blake to fancy she cared for him, but Margaret had never spoken quite like this. It was Loretta that had set the mistake right in so far as it could be rectified,—Loretta that had sought out the woman she had supposed her rival and in the fulness of her own great joy tried to infuse something of vitality into the love which Angus's doubt of her had slain in Margaret's heart. And then Bella had come forward, pleading her mistake and her remorse. Margaret had been willing enough to forgive, to forget, but Loring she had never seen face to face since a day six years ago when he had parted from her believing her untrue.

“When he comes now,” said Bella, in a moment, and stretching out her hands to Margaret's, “perhaps it may be different. Remember, you have only had his letters. You have never seen him; and you cannot tell what the first words that pass between you may revive. And Loretta has such faith in him! She has been so proud of his friendship,—so proud of him abroad.”

“Loretta is like no one else,” said Margaret, gently.

Which Miss Loring acknowledged to be the fact.

The changes on The Fenns, to which Kenyon and his wife were returning after an absence of three years, were very few. The house on the little island was unaltered. Mrs. Lyons was drifting into a complacent stage of invalidism, when her seclusion and the careful attendance upon her were rather gratifying than otherwise. Dr. Maynard still came back and forth, reporting news of the Blakes with keen delight. Phoebe Sparks ruled Kenyon's house, and Captain Thompson continued to hold his own as mariner of the seas between The Fenns and the Main. However lacking in background or tradition Loring had thought the Islands in his first interview with Kenyon's wife, certain it is that among the Fenn people she had acquired the reputation of quite a heroine of romance. And her life abroad, the long honeymoon Kenyon had insisted upon, had not prevented her from taking an active interest that concerned the Islands and their people. Letters, books, papers, boxes full of various gifts for everybody, had come back

from time to time. When Loretta's little boy was born and news was sent of him to The Fenns, the excitement went so far as to induce Samuel Hexam to light a bonfire on the barren hill-top beyond the doctor's house. The beams sped out ruddily upon the waters between Fenn and what might be the country where the Blakes were staying,—might (so the old doctor fancifully thought) reach as a kindly message Loretta, who at that moment was sitting by her child in the English home which she and Kenyon had temporarily made. When word came of the Blakes' return,—when Miss Loring and Miss Chetwynde appeared one day, having been desired to meet Loretta and her husband at Little Fenn,—the enthusiasm on the older island was very great. Kenyon and his wife were coming down on Angus Loring's yacht, and it was for their arrival that Bella and Margaret Chetwynde were now waiting.

Meanwhile, on the yacht, which was slowly heading towards the island, a tall young lady with a beautiful and very joyous face was standing at Loring's side, straining her gaze to discern every object on shore. Angus corrected her mistakes with a careless smile.

"Margaret will be there, and Bella, of course," Loretta said, proudly. "Kenyon, come here, will you, and put Angus down. He insists that I cannot see my own garden."

Kenyon, who had been absorbed in a question of reefing with the captain of the yacht, turned as his wife spoke, and sauntered over to her side.

"I don't know what you are either of you looking for," he said, shortly. "There is the island; there is the red roofing of the house. Did you mistake that for the dahlias in the garden, Loretta?"

"You are both ready to laugh at me," said Loretta. But in a moment she looked up at her husband with a meaning smile, which his face reflected. This was the home-coming she had planned and dreamed of! Though it was but for a few days, since Mayridge was their final destination, it was a comfort to go back with Kenyon to The Fenns. Would not these islands always hold a first place in her heart?

The yacht curved about the shore. Bella and Margaret on the porch stood up, trembling with excitement,—with suspense. For one instant Margaret closed her eyes, asking herself whether, by any chance, Bella might be in the right. But there was the confusion and excitement of the people on older Fenn, who had gathered about the shore to make Loretta welcome. Whatever might follow, this moment certainly should be given only to greeting Loretta Blake's return.

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CONFESSIONS OF A REFORMED HUMORIST.

THE arrival of a new boy in the little village of Greensborough, Greene County, Pennsylvania, on the 30th of July, 1844, interested me about as little as any event that ever occurred on the banks of the Monongahela. Other villagers came to inquire after the boy and his pretty mother; they decided whom the baby looked like, and what his name should be; they dandled him and guessed at his weight; they petted and praised him, and loved him. But I and the baby didn't seem to get on. At first sight of him I broke into pitiful wails, and brandished my fists as though I had met my mortal enemy. As the boy grew older, and opportunities for annoying him presented themselves more frequently, I persecuted him the more. I thrust my thumb into his eyes; I kicked the blankets off his sleeping form of nights; often I had fallen down-stairs with him, had not my sister Mary protected him. I have fidgeted and struggled until I thrust concealed pins into the person of that innocent, shrieking child. As the years of his boyhood came and went, more than all other people in the world I led that boy into mischief and got him into trouble; and I never got over this singular antipathy. I have been unkind to him where I would be tenderly merciful to a stranger; I have been pitiless with him where I was gracious to my enemies. I have been the cause of all his mistakes and misdeeds: a thousand times I have been a stumbling-block in his way, and then I have smitten him because he stumbled over me. Often and often I wonder how bright and happy and good that boy's life might have been had he never met me.

The boy went West with my parents in 1846. Family traditions

state that he wept aloud all the way from Greensborough to Cincinnati. Possibly he was heart-broken at leaving his native State, to which he returned long years afterwards. Perhaps he wept because he knew that the earth and several coaling-stations would one day be seized by the Ohio man, and he was born beyond the Panhandle. Whatever caused his grief, he kept it a secret forever. He merely announced, firmly and distinctly, to every living soul on that boat, that he was crying, but did not say what he was crying about. He never told me: if he did, I have forgotten it.

Six years they abode in Cincinnati. The boy grew in few years and some wisdom. He learned to read in the old family Bible, his mother teaching him his alphabet from the big initial letters. He went to school to Mr. Dinkelman, in an old market-house, somewhere near the river, in Fulton. He learned to swim in the Miami Canal, at Cumminsville. In the eighth year of his age he followed the course of empire towards the setting sun. The family took ship and sailed for Peoria, Illinois, by the overland route, the Illinois river boat, which they took at St. Louis, walking over the sand-bars most of the way from Alton to Kickapoo Bar, five or six miles below Peoria. Just before the boat reached that point, some cows came along and drank up the river. The next week, however, it rained, and the "Clipper" sailed into port. With all this delay, the steamboat reached Peoria three or four years ahead of the railroad,—which might be considered excellent time, in those days.

In Peoria, this worthy boy was thrashed by a succession of educators through a long intellectual gauntlet, beginning at "Hinman's," a model "all-round" school in its time, and extending through the grammar-school to the doors of the high school. Here the rod could not follow him, and as he entered the college of the people he rejoiced to know that if he failed to spell "phthisic" when the teacher said "tizzik" he could not be caned for it. All through his school-days he hated mathematics, never stood very high in any of his classes, was poor in declamation, very fond of history, while "composition-writing" he regarded as a pleasant recreation. Whatever his theme, he treated it lightly. He soon learned that what was such an easy task for him some of the boys most dreaded, and he established a little contraband traffic with them: "I'll write your composition if you'll do my algebra." I have known him to have half a dozen "compositions" in stock, viewing with a tranquil mind a secured mathematical future. Alas for such false training! all he knows about figures now is that his manuscript averages two hundred and forty words to the page. Had he but faithfully studied his own algebra, he might now be able

to write a serial story on a postal card. But he wouldn't be able to invent the story.

In 1861 he graduated from the Peoria High School with high honors, standing about third in the class. John Chalmers was the other boy; he stood first: he was a good student, and one of the best boys I ever knew in school. Mary Luccock stood second: there were only three in the class, and that brought the boy from Greene pretty close to the foot. But he showed no undue elation. He modestly suggested for the class motto "Ex pede Herculem," worried through his examination, and read his first serious attempt at an essay, "The Press and the Ballot-Box." I heard him read it. I don't remember it, but I think it was about as tame an article as a boy of seventeen could possibly write on such a subject. When the doors of the school closed behind him, for his education was completed in the public schools, he was greatly pleased. So were his teachers. I cannot say that his school-days were pleasant to him. He has often told me, in the strictest confidence, that he never wishes he were a boy again. His teachers were kind, sympathetic, I think, and infinitely patient with him, I know; and he often wishes he had not made them so much trouble. But then, you know, school-days are not pleasant to some boys.

In the summer of 1862, at the tender age of eighteen, he was invited by President Lincoln, in a proclamation issued about that time, to save the country. He did so. He entered "C" Company, Forty-Seventh Illinois Infantry, as a private gentleman, and put down the rebellion with a musket longer than himself, for he was brief of stature, being but five feet three inches short. He saved his country, although he hasn't got a deed for it yet. The government wouldn't promote him, and couldn't reduce him: so he held his rank steadily,—which is more than some generals did. He knew General Grant intimately by sight, but was not on speaking terms with him. At General Banks's urgent solicitation, he, with a number of other private gentlemen, accompanied the Red River expedition to Pleasant Hill and back to Atchafalaya Bayou, on an excursion-ticket good both ways, conquering in one direction and running in the other, his pay going on all the same. At the beginning of the Vicksburg campaign he laid his blood-stained sword down long enough to write his first letter for publication. It was a private letter to his father, but it contained some very patriotic sentiments, couched in the earnest language of a young soldier, and it was published in the *Peoria Transcript*, greatly to the surprise of the author. The woods that fringed the bayou at Young's Point, Louisiana, can tell you how proud he was of it. His head swam with delight. He wished he had known it would be published: he would have made it longer. See

what a blessed thing it is for the world of readers that authors do not know whether their articles will be published. That is the way editors stand like protecting bulwarks between the writer and the reader. Now, look at the length of this article: anybody could tell that the writer knew pretty well it was to be printed.

After the close of the war, the young veteran at once entered the profession of letters, being appointed a clerk in the Peoria Post-Office, where he served about two years, occasionally running as extra man on the railway mail-routes running out of Peoria. All this time he was ambitious in an artistic direction. He was haunted by a presentiment that he was destined to be a great artist, and passed much of his time drawing pictures on the good manila paper furnished by the government, and often he dreamed of painting a great historical picture as big as the side of a barn, with at least twenty dollars' worth of paint. So he journeyed to New York to see about it. After a few months' residence in that city, it began to dawn upon him that he was about two hundred and fifty years too late to be a great artist. Had he gone to New York in 1667, he could have bought all Manhattan Island with the money that a few materials and a quarter's tuition were now costing him. He took his pen in hand, and began to write New York letters for the *Peoria Transcript*. One of these, "The sailing of the Arizona," pleased Mr. Enoch Emery, the editor, and he wrote to the great artist, asking him to come home, that he "might make an editor outen him." He went, and was set to work reading proof and "editing telegraph" on a morning paper, and from the day he bent over the first proof he wondered that he ever thought there was any pleasant occupation in the world outside a newspaper office. The *Transcript* was a good school of journalism, for Mr. Emery was one of the best editors I ever knew: I guess the first editor a youngster writes under always is. But he was a man of excellent ideas. When the paper was full of long editorials he scolded everybody for laziness. When it was only half filled with short paragraphs he praised all hands for industry and brightness. "Only a lazy man," he said, "will write long editorials." "Young man," he said to me one day, when I had printed something that would have looked better for our side unprinted, "it isn't knowing what to put into a paper that makes an editor; it's knowing what to keep out. Any fool can fill a paper with original matter every day, but a good editor will reject three or four fifths of all that is offered him." He never had any faith in my so-called humor, and frequently repressed my exuberant flights. "Young man," he said, "I want you to learn to walk before you try to prance." And on another occasion he said, "See here, young man, when I want anything funny in this paper I'll

write it myself." He was right: the tendency of a "funny" young man is to be too funny; to be as funny as he can be all the time; to be a "grig," which is to be a bore. I always liked Mr. Emery, in spite of, and, I think now, because of, his severe training.

Alas! I see I have glided into the upper-case I. It was my intention to keep my identity carefully concealed until the close of these confessions, and then suddenly spring the revelation upon the startled audience, "That boy now stands before you." I have seen this done with great effect in Sunday-school conventions and on Commencement occasions, although I must confess that it always detracted a little from the impressiveness of the revelation when the "boy" standing before us was bald as an egg, wore throat-whiskers, and was seventy years young. I am rather an old boy myself, or at least I will be by the time I reach the end of these memoirs, so it is just as well that I should break my identity to the reader gradually. Sometimes these sudden revelations are fatal.

From this point my confessions will be replete with the most interesting incidents that ever delighted a listening audience, most of which I will carefully suppress. You see, I have learned "what to keep out." That is the disappointing part of a confession: the part that everybody wants to hear isn't confessed. When I was a light-hearted school-boy, I once, in alliance with a boy named George Larue, secretly put a large rubber overshoe in a hot-air flue of the school furnace, by means whereof we got a half-holiday while the school-house was aired. Two days later, I danced before the delighted pupils to the sibilant pleasing of the birchen switch. After school I asked George about it. He said he had reformed,—that his conscience wouldn't give him any peace about our deception until he had confessed. "But," I said, "how was it that you didn't get licked?" The conscientious lad explained that he didn't confess on himself; he only confessed on me. I rather liked this: so I told George that I was beginning to feel certain qualms of conscience myself, and if he would just take off his jacket and hat I would endeavor to unburden my mind to him. I think I was really a more conscientious boy than George, for I had to sweep up a large portion of the back yard with him before I felt that peace of mind which follows confession and reparation of wrong. Ever since that day I have observed that it is easier to confess on other people than on one's self, and that there are always plenty of conscientious people around ready to confess all that the penitent leaves out.

On the 4th of March, 1870, I married Carrie S. Garrett, of Peoria. From this time on, so much of her hand and influence ran not only

between but in the lines of my work, that whatever I wrote should have been signed "Robert and Carrie Burdette." Not only by her brave, cheery, hopeful nature—and her courage and cheerfulness I never knew to be equalled—but by her wonderful good sense and judgment did she aid me. Against her advice, shortly after our marriage I and some friends established an evening paper of our own, the *Peoria Review*. The gods loved it, though the advertisers didn't, and in one short year it died, sincerely mourned by its numerous creditors, and leaving in my hands a library valued at about fifteen hundred dollars. I have this library yet. It consists of one volume of Zell's *Encyclopædia*. It may not be worth so much money in the market, but that's about what it cost me: that precious book was all I got out of the *Review*. Since then, several times I have been offered splendid opportunities for starting a new paper to fill a long-felt want. I have never started a second one. I don't want to. I lack business capacity. If I were to print a nine-column quarto on gold-leaf, I couldn't sell it for two cents a copy. In 1874 I was engaged on the editorial staff of *The Hawkeye*, and removed to Burlington, Iowa, where at last our ship, long expected, and, as I then thought, considerably overdue, was signalled in the offing. She was yet several years away from the dock, but she came in steadily, and as we began to make her out we saw that she wasn't a bit classical in her model; she was no trireme; she was no full-rigged ship of the line, like the "Thackeray," the "Charles Lamb," the "Charles Dudley Warner," or the "Howells," she wasn't a stately Mississippi steamer, light and airy as a dream-work of white and gold, and a blaze of light and music and merriment, like the "S. L. Clemens:" she wasn't even a barque rig. She was just a comfortable brig, with a little common summer-day sunshine on her sails, with a jest for her figure-head and a brave little woman at the helm, and carrying an assorted cargo of nonsense and earnestness that lifted her owners clear out of debt and seemed to please the consignees.

My work was very easy all the time I was on *The Hawkeye*. That is, it came easily. There never seemed to be any trouble either in selecting a subject—and it's always more difficult to find the text than it is to write the sermon—or in writing the sketch. Very rarely, either at that or any other time, was there an effort to invent anything "funny." Such an effort is usually a failure. When I sit down and think—I do think, sometimes—I seldom think of anything humorous: my thoughts, with rare exceptions, are serious,—indeed, rather sombre in their tendency. Of late years especially I am aware of a constant struggle against melancholy. But when I look away from myself I see a world full of ludicrous situations, comical incongruities, humorous

incident, and often I find myself laughing at people and things while others around me see nothing but commonplace surroundings. This sometimes wretched faculty of seeing the humorous or ludicrous side of everything was born with me, I think. Oftimes it got me into trouble when I was a boy, in school and in church and in society. So I write usually of what I have really seen, dressing the incident in a good deal of spangle and high complexion, of course, to make it appear well before the footlights. And yet I don't like to laugh at people. I don't think the people about whom I write ever recognize themselves in my sketches. I know I don't want them to. I'd rather laugh with a man a hundred times than laugh at him once. For that matter, I figure as the centre-piece in the most ridiculous light in many of my personal sketches. But all that goes for nothing. It never hurts you to pinch yourself, you know.

As Mrs. Burdette's health failed, I did more and more of my work at home, soon withdrawing entirely from desk-work in *The Hawkeye* office and writing altogether at home. "Her Little Serene Highness" was at this time quite helpless, suffering every moment, in every joint, rheumatic pain, acute and terrible. But in these years of her suffering helplessness more than ever is visible her collaboration in my work. All manuscript was read to her before it went to the paper. She added a thought here and there, suggested a change of word or phrase, and, so tenderly that in her trembling hand the usually dreaded and remorseless "blue pencil" became a wand of blessing, struck out entire sentences and pet paragraphs. How well she knew "what not to print"! Blessed indeed is the man who writes with such a critic looking over his shoulder, a wife who loves and prizes her husband's reputation far above his own vanity or recklessness! At times she wove into our work whole pages of her own, and in some instances she wrote one-half of a long sketch or letter, and I think only ourselves could see where the sketch was joined. One day, as I was gathering up the "copy" which represented the morning's work, she slipped into the leaves with comically feigned timidity a little poem, which, she said, she ventured to lay before the great editor, and would like a copy of the paper containing it, if published. It was "Robin's Nest," a tender little story of her own life. It was her only published poem; although after she fell asleep I found several fragments of her verses, written with pain-stricken fingers that could scarcely hold the pen.

In the winter of 1877 I wrote a lecture about two hours long, and went out and said it without hesitation, manuscript, or remorse. The writing of that lecture, "The Rise and Fall of the Moustache," was a comical piece of business. Dr. Charles Beardsley, then editor-in-chief

of *The Hawkeye*, said to me one day, "Why don't you write a lecture?" Straightway I went home and told Her Little Serene Highness what he said. Her face lit up like a ray of sunshine. "Ah," she exclaimed, "Dr. Beardsley is as wise as he is good. I've been waiting for this for years." I was afraid to venture; but Her Little Serenity coaxed and petted and argued in her womanly way, and at last the lecture was completed. She calmly sent her little blue pencil cruising over its blotted pages, and, after making many prizes and sinking many a gallant rhetorical three-decker, she sent me out. I am afraid I didn't go out very grandly. I was badly frightened. I had no voice, no elocutionary training, no presence, no attitude, no gesture; my pronunciation was faulty, and my grammar uncertain: I had nothing but my lecture and my wife. How could I fail?

The critics were kind; they were more than kind. Indeed, they have always dealt very gently with me. Possibly—I think probably—because I am scarcely worthy of the envenomed steel, but possibly because the critic is not so lurid as he is painted. Certainly I have every reason to feel grateful to him for his forbearance, because he has in silence passed over faults that are so glaring I can even see them myself, and has often given me praise where censure was due. And if ever he shall see fit to withhold the honey-comb of pleasant words and hand me the bitterest gourd that ever stung the palate, I will chew it with all meekness and content, for the sake of the many sweets I have already eaten from his hand.

There was so much money in the lectures that they drew me more and more away from the desk, sordid man that I am. You see the difference between "spoken" and "written" literature? A lecture that no magazine would pay me one hundred dollars for has lasted nearly ten years, is still in steady demand, and is worth four or five thousand dollars a year. And yet that lecture has been published, in book form, ever since the first year of its delivery. But, you see, nobody reads my books. Neither do I.

Always with fear and trembling do I face an audience. This is due partly to a keen consciousness of my own limitations, and partly to that indescribable something which terrifies most public speakers. They go before the audience as before a jury. This feeling passes away in a few moments, however, especially with a warm-hearted audience. Still, I have grown very tired of lecturing,—almost as tired as my audiences, perhaps. Nine winters of lecturing at night and writing newspaper sketches on the railway-trains by day have given me all I want of it, and I am anxious to leave the platform and return to the desk. I am tired of the railroads, tired of the restaurants, tired

of the hotels, tired of scrapple, tired of spare rooms, tired of late hours and early trains, and so nervous and apprehensive about the lecture every night that I had rather run away from an engagement than fill one, any time. I think I would like to be a hermit and spend the rest of my days in some quiet old monastery like Vassar College or Taylor Hall.

In time we wrote other lectures, and in time I published some books. Mrs. Burdette warmly approved of the lectures, but she earnestly endeavored to dissuade me from publishing the books. The lectures were financial successes: in a few years the fee grew from anything I could get, to one hundred dollars a night and as many engagements as there are nights in the week. The books were colossal failures. All I ever got out of the three of them wouldn't pay me for the time spent in their compilation at a day-laborer's wages. She always knew. And right here is as good a chance as I shall ever have to express my honest regret that I ever wrote my "Life of William Penn." It was a book entirely uncalled for: there was really no reason for making fun of a character worthy of the admiration and esteem of men. It was a foolish thing and a wrong one, the writing of that book. It did no harm, however. Nobody read it, and I will say in confidence—and I don't want this repeated outside the office—that I still owe the publishers eight dollars for indexing. The original bill was twelve dollars, I think, but in three or four years enough books have been sold to apply my royalty, four dollars, on the bill for indexing. Still, I am sorry I wrote it. But that's nothing for me. Every day of my life I am sorry for something I did yesterday. So constantly am I doing penance that I live in a state of chronic remorse and habitual hair shirt. I only hope that the day after I die I may not be sorry I did it.

I drifted away from *The Hawkeye* to the *Brooklyn Eagle*, the only journal with which I am now connected. Six years ago we came to Philadelphia to secure medical treatment for Mrs. Burdette, and shortly afterwards made our home in Ardmore. Here, wearied with the long struggle with pain and helplessness, Her Little Serene Highness fell asleep; and as I close this paper I miss the loving collaboration that with so much of grace and delicacy would have better prepared these pages for the reader. The first throb of literary ambition, my earliest and later successes, so far as I have been successful, whatever words of mine men may be pleased to remember most pleasantly, whatever of earnestness and high purpose there is in my life, whatever inspiration I ever had or have that enters into my work and makes it more worthy of acceptance, I owe to the gentlest, best, and wisest of critics and

collaborators, a loving, devoted wife. And if ever I should win one of the prizes which men sometimes give to those who amuse them, the wreath should be placed, not on the head of the jester who laughs and sings, but on the brows of her who inspired the mirth and the song.

Robert J. Burdette.

PSYCHE.

SOFTLY, with palpitating heart,
 She came to where he lay concealed apart.
 The lamp she held intensified the gloom,
 And in the dusk wrought shadowy shapes of doom.

Her starry eyes
 O'er-brimmed with troubled tears,
 Her pulses throbbing wildly in her ears,
 She stood beside him where he lay
 Hushed in the deep
 Of sweet, unconscious sleep.

But as she stifled back her sighs
 And tried to look upon that cherished form,
 Remembrance shook her purpose warm,
 And, chiding, seemed to say,
 "Why seek to solve, why, curious, thus destroy,
 The mystery of joy?"

What doubt unblest, what faithless fear, is this
 Which tempts to paths none may retrace,
 Which moves thee—fond one!—to unveil the face
 Of bliss?

Is't not enough to feel it thine?
 Like Semele, wouldst gaze on the Divine?
 Secret the soul of Rapture dwells;
 Love gives, yet jealous tests repels,
 Nor will of force be known,
 And bashful Beauty viewed too near—is gone."

Florence Earle Coates.

THE POLICY OF INSURANCE.

THE fact that insurance has been the gradual growth of the last seven or eight hundred years shows that it has been in some degree a factor in the wonderful development of the industrial age of civilization. But for its meeting a want in the progress of humanity, it could never have attained its present importance. Commencing with an occasional application to merchandise in transportation, it has been extended to cover risks of the most varied description, and human ingenuity is constantly at work to discover new fields to which it may be applied. Its theory is faultless: by association, losses which would be crushing to the individual are subdivided so that the burden becomes trivial to each. The command of St. Paul, "Bear ye one another's burdens," by the alchemy of modern enterprise is transmuted from a barren effort of charity to a profitable business in which both the succorer and the succored find their account. Credit is facilitated and commerce is stimulated; the widow and the orphan are protected from poverty.

Such is the theory of insurance; and yet, in spite of the experience of so many centuries, it may be questioned whether the evils inseparable from the modern development of the system have not grown to outweigh its advantages. The fact that a thing has been long practised in many lands raises of itself only a faint presumption in its favor. Strongly akin to insurance in the aleatory character common to both is the lottery, which for centuries after its invention, or rediscovery, by Benedetto Gentile was favored by every government in Christendom, and has only within little more than a generation been forbidden by a portion of them as contrary to public policy. Even the legal prohibition of the lottery is insufficient for its suppression, and contraband speculation in its chances is still one of the commonest of offences.

It would seem worth the while of our legislators to consider whether the prohibition of the lottery should not be followed by the suppression of insurance. The evil of the lottery is the temptation with which it lures the people to risk sums which they cannot prudently afford in the hope of securing gain without labor; its benefit, when conducted by governments, is that it affords a liberal source of revenue willingly contributed by the taxables. The benefit of insurance I have already described; and as this is greater than that of the lottery, so are the correlative evils greater. The fact that insurance can be obtained upon almost any risk, thus relieving the individual from responsibility for

his own laches or recklessness, exercises a moral influence on the community even worse than the gambling spirit fostered by the lottery. More than this, it is a direct incentive to crime. Underwriters have told me that it is a received axiom in insurance circles that from twenty to thirty per cent. of fires are incendiary, purposely set for the purpose of gaining the amount insured. Even more serious is the case of marine risks, where life as well as property is sacrificed. To say nothing of absolute barratry, can any one imagine that without insurance such legislation as that of Mr. Plimsoll would be requisite?—that merchants would deliberately send forth unseaworthy ships, overloaded and undermanned, taking the chance of making a sale of vessel and cargo to the underwriters? On every ocean "Plimsoll's line" is a standing advertisement of the effort required to abate in some degree the wrongs arising from insurance. Any system which can stimulate the perpetration of a crime like that of Thomassen at Bremerhaven must involve possibilities of evil well worthy the thoughtful consideration of the publicist.

When New Hampshire not long ago enacted the valued policy law which induced all the insurance agencies to withdraw from the State, there was a general chorus of ridicule and a confident prediction that a twelvemonth would see the obnoxious law repealed and the insurance companies supplicated to return. Yet New Hampshire is thoroughly well satisfied with the position, and has no desire to invite the underwriters back. Since they expelled themselves and deprived the State of the benefits of their presence, losses by fire have diminished by about thirty per cent. Take the tremendous aggregate of annual loss on the continent, which for 1886 is estimated at \$116,600,000, and assume that this would be reduced even one-quarter by the abolition of insurance, and we will see how much property, how much of the result of human labor, would be saved, and how much richer the community would be. The saving, moreover, would grow as the years rolled on; for not only would each individual be rendered more watchful and more careful, but a safer style of building would prevail, more substantial structures would be imperatively demanded, and the "defective flue" and other death-traps would in time become things of the past. A minor but yet highly important consideration is the fact that under modern methods the rates charged for insurance are absurdly greater than the risk. The statistics of the last five years show that more than half the fire-companies of the United States have paid out for expenses and dividends as much as they have for losses, thus forcing the assured to pay for protection double the value of the real risks assumed. At the same time, no one can afford not to insure, for his property is at the

mercy of his neighbors or of his tenants, rendered reckless or possibly criminal by the temptations of insurance.

The same reasoning applies to marine insurance. Deprived of it, the ship-owner would be compelled to see that his vessel was staunch, fully found, safely loaded, well manned, and ably commanded. He would do this not only for the sake of the bottom, but because shippers would not otherwise intrust him with their freights. The list of maritime casualties would diminish, including the frightful aggregate of the loss of human life by sea.

There is another class of insurance against those casualties which may be described as acts of God, against which human prudence is virtually unavailing,—such as the cyclone insurance so rapidly growing in this country, and the insurance against hail common in Southern Europe. Of this class, the only one of magnitude sufficient to render it of public concern is life insurance, and in this the evils are not, at least as yet, so great as in fire and marine underwriting. Cases of murder or suicide for the insurance-money are, happily, rare, and speculative “graveyard insurance” is not practised to any great extent. Yet there can be no question that, looked upon in the light of a savings-bank, life insurance is a very costly depository for the accumulations of thrift, and that it could scarce flourish but for the attractions of its aleatory or gambling character. In the reckless effort to create business the commissions granted to agents are so large that a charge for premiums becomes necessary greatly in excess of what is justified by the expectation of life. The insured is practically contributing a notable portion of his premium, not for insurance, but for the support of a horde of canvassers traversing the land and pursuing an unproductive industry of no value to the community. A system of post-office savings-banks would furnish a vastly cheaper and more wholesome incentive for small economies. The rich can take care of their own accumulations.

For these reasons it seems to me a question well worthy the attention of the sociologist whether public policy does not require that insurance should follow the lottery in being subjected to legal prohibition. The favor shown by underwriters to what are known as co-insurance policies, in which the assured participates in the risk, is in itself an admission that the whole existing system is a vicious one. It points, moreover, to the adoption of the strictly mutual plan, so successful in the case of what are known as the “Factory Mutuals,” by which in fire underwriting the evils are reduced to a minimum. If insurance should not be wholly abrogated, it might at least be restricted, as regards fire, to this basis.

Henry C. Lea.

WAS IT WORTH WHILE?

WHAT had brought me to Seville?

The brightest man in the trade had said to me, after a tedious London book-sale, as we were dining together, "Try Spain. I have heard of some good finds made there in your special line. I could not tell you where to go, only there is nothing to be done in the beaten tracks. The large cities have been quite ransacked. In a hay-stack of rubbish you might, however, find your needle."

I had six weeks before me. It was the middle of August. I had never been in Spain, and I was due in New York some time in November.

The steamer landed me at Cadiz. Now, in book-hunting, a whim sometimes is an inspiration. On board of the steamer was an exceedingly pretty South American lady, accompanied by a man-servant. Such slight attentions as I could pay her were gratefully accepted. Off the French coast the weather was very bad, and once on a rough day I had given the lady my arm when she found it impossible to go below unassisted. My Spanish was limited, but she spoke English fluently. Arriving at Cadiz, a package belonging to the lady went astray, having been turned over to another passenger. I fortunately was cognizant of the mistake, and succeeded in restoring her lost property. She was profuse in her thanks. In course of conversation, she told me she was from Valparaiso, and that her ancestors had come from old Spain to Chili in the middle of the eighteenth century. This was her first visit to the Peninsula. She spoke with enthusiasm of the delights in store for her. She gave me the name of some small town in Aragon which had been the home of her people. She was going to spend a year there at the very least. She might still, she hoped, find some one who bore the family name. Things changed so slowly in Spain. She had educational plans, and no matter if her people were poor or ignorant, she would care for them. She would so love to pose as the beneficent fairy. "It was to her," she said, with rapture, "as some pilgrimage to a shrine." But first she was going to Seville.

Had I ever been in Seville? she inquired, and she gave me the name of a hotel where she would stop.

"As well Seville as anywhere else," I said, as I bade her good-by.

At Cadiz I spent four days, without giving another thought to my pleasant companion. Having exhausted Cadiz, I made up my mind to go to Seville, and, strangely enough, *en route*, bound for the same place

I met the Chilian lady. She greeted me kindly, and we chatted together. She was in love with Cadiz, and would have prolonged her stay, only she had received letters from her friends in Seville. In course of conversation, replying to a compliment on her English, she told me that she had been for two years at a school in Baltimore. She expressed regret that I was a stranger in a strange land, with no home to go to, and contrasted my condition with her happiness and the welcome she was to receive in Seville.

The lady's servant, an old Chilian, was utterly unfamiliar with travelling, and I attended to her luggage. Arriving at the hotel, I engaged a comfortable apartment for her, as both the lady and her servant were incompetent to take care of themselves.

In Seville I went about my business, hunting through the old shops dealing in books, passing a good many hours in the library. Occasionally at the *table-d'hôte* I met the lady. Presuming on our slight acquaintance, I proffered my services, and one day she begged me to post some letters for her. I fancied that she looked depressed, but I did not venture to question her. The hotel was a gloomy one, and, as I found, had been in repute some thirty years before, but was now little frequented. The rooms were cheerless and the furniture shabby. The melancholy appearance of the house had little effect on me, as I was all day in the streets, preferring dining out of the hotel.

Around the first story of the hotel ran an iron balcony, protected from the sun by a parti-colored awning. One evening, tired with sight-seeing, and wishing to smoke my cigar, I sought a place on the balcony. The street was not wide, and the moonbeams scarcely penetrated the gloom. There was apparently somebody already in possession of the narrow balcony. It was the Chilian lady. I touched my hat, hoped she was well, complained of the warm day and of the lassitude it caused, apologized for my intrusion, and was about leaving, when she dropped her slowly-swaying fan and placed a finger on my arm. I noticed at once that her hand was tremulous.

In a low tone she said to me, "Pardon me, sir, if I take a very great liberty with you, but I am placed in a most embarrassing position. I hardly know what to do, or how to break the matter to you."

I was amazed at this strange introduction,—at her seeming agitation.

"In my own country," she continued, "I enjoy a certain amount of esteem,—of consideration. If I did not tell you something of my history, you would not understand me, nor the reasons I have for begging your attention."

"I must confess, madam, that I do not understand." I was feeling quite uncomfortable.

"I was married very young, to a most worthy person of mature age, who was very, very good to me. When he died,—poor gentleman!—some four years ago, all my troubles began. He left me in possession of a handsome income; but then a year ago a second marriage was proposed to me by the relatives of my late husband, and the person they wanted me to marry was exceedingly distasteful to me. They spun their toils around me; and I might have been forced into a most uncongenial alliance had I not at the very last moment escaped by what was nothing else than flight. Taking the Isthmus route with my servant, I made my way to New York, and thence, by the first steamer, to England."

"Did you not tell me that here in old Spain you would find true happiness? What about those friends here who were to welcome you?" I inquired, in a rather cross-questioning way.

"It was the saddest, the bitterest delusion. All my dream of happiness has vanished. It seems that the family of my husband have written to the elder branch here, people of high standing in Seville, and I regret to say I have been treated by them in the rudest, the harshest way. The simple accident that we were thrown together on the same steamer and are at the same house has subjected me to the vilest suspicions. Now, under these most painful circumstances, what in the name of heaven am I to do?"

I replied, on the spur of the moment, "Madam, it is not what you have to do, but what I must do."

I must confess that what she told me was by no means pleasant. Perhaps some night or other when I am coming home—I recalled Alfred de Musset—some fellow enveloped in a dark mantle will pounce on me, drive a knife into the small of my back, and a dead bookseller will encumber a street in Seville. Was Seville getting too hot for me? Was this a Spanish intrigue,—a new version of *Gil Blas*? I hardly knew what to think. I looked at the lady, and saw grief and chagrin painted on her face.

"Oh, it is very wretched," she said. "And what I have told you sounds, possibly, from my ignorance of English, as if it were the story of—of an *aventurière*. But as an honorable gentleman, which I believe you to be, there is only one course for you to take, and you show your keen sense of propriety by having suggested it."

I was just then imagining two paths of egress. One would singularly relieve the strained conditions of the situation, the other was much more complex, very chivalric, but entangling. I must either leave Seville at once or make honorable love to her.

Was I the least bit in love with her? She could not have been

more than twenty-two. Her conversation and manner showed slight acquaintance with the world, but she was all the more charming from her natural simplicity. She was utterly unaffected. I had, however, studied her mental qualities but little. That she was exceedingly beautiful I was quite conscious of. I felt saddened when I contrasted her child-like gayety of a week before with her present unfortunate realizations. Her servant had told me, unasked on my part, of the great wealth and high social position of his lady at Valparaiso, but that made little impression on me, for I deemed it only the vauntings of a self-important lackey. She had, however, a day or so before, asked me about her letter of credit, the intricacies of which she was unable to fathom. She had even shown me her credit from Brown Brothers for a very handsome amount,—so large, in fact, that I stared at the big figure.

"They are," continued the lady, "exceedingly censorious, stupid, and conventional in Spain about family relationships, and they follow out the customs of feudal times. A poor woman who has lost her husband is absolutely under restraint. Oh, the things they have been telling me,—what I am to do, what I am not to do! There are millions—millions of the simplest actions on my part which, they inform me, will ruin me. They have, I believe, actually set spies on me. I have the consciousness that I am watched. They want me to dismiss my poor old Ramon. I absolutely think they have some designs on my liberty, and hint that I shall never leave Spain. Oh, it is nothing like holding me in confinement: they would not dare to do that, because—Our Lady be praised!—I am not a Spanish subject, and then, besides, I have taken my precautions. You posted some letters for me: you did not forget them?"

"They were put in the post-office with my own hands not a quarter of an hour after they were given to me," I replied.

"Had you read the addresses, you would have found that one was to the diplomatic representative of Chili at Madrid, the other to the wife of the Spanish minister in France, who is a South American. I wrote to them so that in case I were spirited away search might be made for what was left of me. My husband's relatives might not be capable of a crime, though they seem leagued together to torture me to death. I am one poor woman against fifty of them."

"Is it a question of money?" I inquired.

"Precisely. My husband's fortune was a large one. Although I was an orphan, I was by no means portionless. They have set a terrible old lawyer at me, who quotes long rigmroles of Spanish jurisprudence for my benefit. The very sight of him gives me a headache. My poor

husband was born in Seville, as I told you, and there had been some large commercial transactions between him and his family here. They claim that the estate of my husband was largely indebted to them. Had it been true, my husband, who was the soul of honor, would never have left a single debt unpaid. The more they talk to me about their laws, the less I understand them. They will drive me crazy. They threaten suits. They impugn my character. But I must return to where I started."

"Which is, What am I to do?"

"Do not throw away your cigar. Well, light another. Nervously agitated as I am, a cigarette might calm me." Out of her pocket she drew a silver case, and took from it a cigarette. I proffered a light, and she smoked away. The pause in our conversation became distressingly prolonged.

"I might have written you all this," she said, "but women never can write to men without compromising themselves, and I am glad I did not."

"And what would you have written?" I asked.

"I do not know," she simply replied. "It has been hard enough for me to tell you." And she threw away her cigarette and covered her face with her hands.

"You have given me," I said, "a portion of your life-history, which I am bound to believe."

"Sir," she cried, as she stood erect before me, with blanched face, her lips quivering, "am I to understand that there is on your part the least suspicion of a doubt? Pray let me pass."

"On my honor, I believe you. Now listen to me. What do you know about me?"

"Nothing. What should I know, or want to know? I have taken you for a gentleman, and, notwithstanding your cruel doubts about me, I believe you to be one still. I have fancied you were a student,—why I scarcely know; because, perhaps, on board of ship you were constantly reading, and your pockets were full of books. But what you are, or how you earn your living, is really none of my business."

"Your judgment of me is really not at fault. In the United States I sell rare books. I spend my summers abroad hunting up my special merchandise all over the Continent." That confession I thought would knock out all the romance and place me on a commonplace basis.

"An honorable profession, doubtless. I know, however, nothing about it. But what has that to do with the situation? If you were the

son of one of those men of fabulous wealth who live in your country, or a tailor, or a shoemaker, how would that interest me? But it is getting late, and still I see no solution to my troubles."

She looked inexpressibly beautiful, as she bent towards me with an anxious, solicitous gaze. Following the Spanish fashion, a deep red rose bloomed in her dark hair, her shapely head having thrown over it a heavy veil. She had pushed back her head-covering; the rose had fallen, but she had picked it up, thwarting my effort to secure it, and now she was twirling the flower nervously in her fingers until some of the leaves were thrown off.

"Would you give me that rose?" I asked, boldly.

"Never," she answered. As I stretched out my hand impatiently, she threw the rose over the balcony.

"Suppose I went after it?"

"Over the balcony? That would be silly."

"Still, I should so very much have liked to claim the flower as my sole reward. My presence here in Seville, so I must understand it, is a source of embarrassment to you. I am supposed—supposed to be——"

"For the Madonna's sake, do not give breath to the word, or I shall die of shame. It is sufficient that you comprehend me."

"But you must understand how humiliated I must feel at being forced to leave Seville. Any one with the least spark of manhood would hardly brook it. I might bid this precious family defiance,—snap my fingers in their combined faces,—tell them to go to the devil." I was getting angry.

"I can understand that, and feel for you. I should despise a coward; but, save some slight inconvenience, there can be no sacrifice on your part of self-respect."

"How do you know? You are very lovely."

"Must I then leave you? and has your good determination come to naught?" She said this with a gasp. I looked at her long, eagerly, yearningly. She stood as motionless, as impassive, as a statue. Had her hand, her snow-white hand, which clung to the iron balcony, only trembled, I might have stayed.

"But," I cried, "it would be dastardly to leave you now."

"You are very good. You could not help me except in one way, and that must be by bidding Seville good-by."

"Nothing keeps me here,—nothing," I replied, bitterly. "I can bid this stupid old town good-by to-night. I will leave, then, to-morrow. It is indifferent where I go to." She uttered not one word. "Good-by," I said. I offered my hand. She took it, after a moment's

hesitation, and then in a whisper I heard this: "Not as a recompense, but simply as a remembrance,—for the poor rose has gone,—would you accept this *étui*?"

"It is very ungracious on my part, madam," I said, with pique, "but I must decline your gift."

"It is very precious to me, because it belonged to my poor husband. Were you unworthy I would not have offered it. I am so sorry! But now good-evening. You have been so good, so considerate to me, that your refusal does not wound me. Good-night." And, bowing to me, she left the balcony.

Had I made a fool of myself? I scarcely knew. I went out of the hotel. Happening to look on the pavement, I saw between the interstices of the rough stones the identical rose, stripped only of a leaf or two. I stuck it in my button-hole. It was late before I went to bed, and later when I slept.

I had never seen my Chilian lady at breakfast before. Next morning, just as I was seated at the table, dawdling with a bunch of grapes, the man-servant entered, and, either by accident or design, moved a chair for his mistress directly opposite to me. The lady sat down. At once she spoke to me. "I have not closed my eyes all night. I never breakfast before twelve; but I could not let you go away angry with me, without—without—" she had not lifted her face from her plate, but now she looked at me with her large, dreamy eyes—"without apologizing for my indiscretion. But indeed it was the best thing for me to do. Oh, the weary days I shall have to spend! Why—why did I leave home? If I only had an adviser! Is that my rose?" she suddenly asked, indicating with outstretched taper finger the flower. It was fresh still, for I had placed it in water over-night.

"It is, madam. I did not jump over the balcony, but found it—poor thing!—just where you had thrown it."

"Then you must have looked for it."

"Do you give it to me now?" I asked.

"I could not claim it," she sadly said. "But let us talk of other things. Fortunately, no one here understands English. Had I better take some chocolate? I am faint for want of food, for I broke no bread yesterday." Then she talked of Seville,—what little she knew of it. She had seen, so far, nothing. Next she asked, very quietly, "Are you going away to-day?"

"All my preparations are made, and you will have the supreme happiness of never seeing me again. In less than a month from now I shall be in the United States."

"God give you a safe return home! I shall pray devoutly for

that." Her voice was broken. "I must leave you now: this food is choking me. Will you not, as a token of peace between us, put your rose, when it is dead and withered, in this cigarette-case of mine?—keep it as a remembrance?"

"Of you?" I asked, passionately, as I stood beside her.

"I do not know. It was so strange you found the rose. I had hoped you would find it. I cannot lie to you, for I saw you pick it up, and knew——"

"I loved you."

"No, scarcely; that you had forgiven me."

"Suppose," I said, "I give some substantial evidence to this most illustrious Seville family that they are not mistaken, after all,—that this comedy might have some basis of fact."

"Comedy! Alas! it might be a tragedy. I can no longer talk to you: we shall be observed. I shall be forced to leave you, at once,—at once." Was she yielding? But then there was no mistaking the words that followed: "If it could be otherwise, you would despise me, for all the world might think, you would think, that I had flung myself at your mercy. I am not to be won so. We must never talk of this again. Here is the landlord,—probably paid to watch me." Then she said in Spanish to me, "Yesterday, señor, I saw in a by-street back of the cathedral an old woman who was arranging her wares. As you are looking for curiosities,—antiquities,—you might find some there. Ramon bought an old flint and steel there. As a stranger here, perhaps the landlord will tell you of the place."

"Certainly, sir: I know the old woman," said the landlord; and the exact locality was given me.

"It is, I believe, so near that you can go there before you leave to-day," said the lady.

"The gentleman is then going to-day?" inquired the landlord, as he left us.

"Go there," she said, in English, "for I, most unfortunate, might bring you luck. And now God bless you! Though I never may see you again, I will never forget you." Then she offered me once more her hand, and in its soft palm there was the *étui*, which was slipped into mine. Then a servant came, announcing some visitors who were waiting for her, and she left the dining-room.

I hurried to my room. Was there anything in the *étui*? It was empty. I arranged my baggage, and went out for a final stroll. I wanted to get rid of my distress. Did she care for me? I could not tell.

I remembered the old curiosity-vender. The direction was plain

enough. I found it at once. The stock in trade was insignificant. A single board had heaped up on it miscellaneous goods. For a background, on a butcher's rack were suspended a variety of things. It was nothing more than a Spanish junk-shop. A brace of rusty swords, a blunderbuss, an old saddle, a cruel-looking bit, a mule's tufted headstall, three guitars in various degrees of smash, hung from the hooks. On the board, an old door which stood on trestles, was a bronze crucifix worth the price of the metal, a brass barber's basin, the cast-off jacket of some bull-fighter, with its tawdry velvet and lack-lustre spangles, the works of a clock, a peasant's hat, a tray of shells, a rosary or two, and a leather Cordovan cushion with a tear in it. There was not a single book. A dirty old woman appeared suddenly, and made for me at once. "What would the gentleman buy? Everything was very precious. The swords were of the time of the Cid. Would the noble gentleman come inside? She had a picture to show which was wonderful——"

I wanted some souvenir of Seville, and, seeing a small earthen-ware crock of Moorish form, gaudy in color, picked it up, but it disclosed a badly-mended crack. Then I handled the brass basin. It was imperfect, having several holes in it. I put it back in its place and stood it on what I took to be a block of old wood. As I touched the latter I found it was leather and had the semblance of a book, the back of it being towards me. The leather had dropped off of it, but that old stitching, which defied time, was still solid. It looked venerable; but I had handled a thousand old fellows of the same kind, only good for the paper-mill. I touched it again; but no sooner had I done so than I felt an electric thrill pass through my arm. Account for it as you please, there is some occult sympathy between mind and matter.

"How much for this old basin with holes through it like a sieve?" I asked.

The old woman mentioned a price about equivalent to forty-five cents, and added, "There is not such another in all Spain. What are a few holes? Solder will stop them up; then you can furbish it up until it shines like gold."

I took up the basin, lifting up the book with it. It was what is known as a pot-quarto. On a fragment of leather, hanging by a filament, I made out a portion of what must have been a commonplace title,—"*SUMMA COLLATIONE*." I had seen cart-loads of books of the sixteenth century with this meaningless title. With seeming indifference I fluttered the leaves. I was, somehow or other, feverish with impatience. It was, of course, all in Latin. A bound-up volume composed of tracts, papers, dissertations on abstract religious questions

of the sixteenth century, old theological quarrels, exponents of impossible dogmas,—wordy trash, dead, gone, and forgotten. All this was bound together, without any attempt at chronological order. I had just about got to the end of it, was in the act of putting it down, when—what was that magic head-line which blazed before me flashing with electric fires? Could I believe my eyes? I was stone-cold now. Was I dreaming?—the subject of some delusion? Still there was the ugly brass basin, the dirty old woman with the pendulous ear-rings and garlicky breath, and I was standing in the full blaze of the hot Spanish sun in the dirtiest street in all Seville. I read the famous title, “DE INSULIS NUPE INVENTIS.”

That was enough. What was it? Nothing else than the first printed account of the discovery of America by Columbus,—“*Epistola Christoferi Colombi*,”—and known as “The Columbus Letter,” a prize among prizes, a discovery almost unique of its kind. I nervously thumbed over the few leaves. I turned my back to the woman: she might see my emotion. I devoured the first lines. Quick as lightning I examined every page. They were without a thumb-mark,—had not an abrasion. Having been a trifle smaller than the other things bound in the book, they had escaped the least trimming. For centuries no one had even looked at the book.

Did I feel ashamed of an act of duplicity? Not at all. You have to do it under such circumstances.

“The old basin,” I said to the woman, in the most indifferent way, “I do not mind taking at your price, providing you throw in this old book.”

“Santa Maria! I should be ruined, my noble gentleman! It is a good book, cram-full of piety. You might read it and save your soul. If I knew my letters, no money would pay me to part with it. It is cheap for a quarter of a dollar. You would not have a good Christian woman starve?”

Oh, the delight of playing with her, as a cat would play with a mouse! It gave such zest! I had courage enough to pretend leaving the stand. The old woman seemed willing to yield. I turned quickly on her.

“You are very hard to deal with, and think I must be made of gold.” I stroked my long beard. “I shall have to shave in order to use your basin, and then perhaps the leaves of this old trashy book—see how the binding is all gone—will serve me, when torn up, to cleanse my razor of lather.”

“It might be,” said the old woman. “*Quien sabe?*”

I handed her the money,—some sixty-five cents,—and she gleefully

shoved my purchases under my arm, half afraid that I would back out of my bargain. I no sooner had book and basin than I ran off like mad. As I jumped over a gutter the basin fell with a clang on the stones. Was it a scene of enchantment?—the sound of a magic gong, and then the vanishing of everything? No! the pot-quarto was safe, and I was pressing it so tight to my side that it hurt me. I did not deign to pick up the miserable basin, but left it in the kennel. At last, bathed in perspiration, I arrived at the hotel.

I rushed to my room and locked the door. I closed the shutters: some inquisitive eyes might see my prize. I danced around that pot-quarto as one possessed. When I came to my sober senses I examined the book carefully. In a lot of dross had been set my wedge of gold. Then all of a sudden came despondency,—cruel doubt: some one might prevent my leaving Spain with the book. I looked up my revolver and saw it was in good order. I put the loaded weapon near the book. I thought what I had better do. Like the thief who gouges out the diamond of purest water from the bracelet, I took my knife and cut clear the great leaves from the binding. I put them carefully between some sheets of strong paper, covered that again with my finest pocket-handkerchief, and slipped it all under my shirt. It was an exceedingly warm day, but how much hotter the old black-letter leaves as an article of personal wear or a literary plaster made me I was utterly indifferent about. Every trace of the old book I felt must be destroyed. All evidence had to be obliterated. I must get rid of it. The body might perish, now that I had the soul. There are no fireplaces in Spanish hotels. I could not burn it. I looked out of the back of the hotel. There was a gloomy grass-grown court-yard, and on one side of it something that looked like a ruined cistern. It gaped black to me. It required some skill to pitch the book into the yawning gulf. I studied the distance accurately, and gave the volume a toss. It spread out its old covers, hovered with flapping wings like a bird in mid-air for a moment, and then, with a swoop, hawk-like, pitched right into the centre of the cistern and disappeared.

I looked at my watch. It was fifteen minutes of twelve. I rushed down-stairs. "Take what you want," I cried to the landlord; and I am convinced that from the contents of my purse, which I emptied on the table, he helped himself very liberally. I sprang into a carriage which was at the door.

"Is the gentleman ill?" asked the head waiter.

There was a moment's delay: an obstinate water-carrier's mule blocked the way. I looked up at the balcony. There was no one there; but a window was opened, and a fair white hand was waved

towards me. I had almost forgotten the lady, and felt ashamed of myself. On my part it looked like a precipitate flight.

Suppose, after all, I had been mistaken! My swan might be a goose. The most prudent man is sometimes carried away, overlooking a palpable absurdity which in his sober senses he would instantly detect. Still, my acquaintance with such things was not superficial, for I had devoted years to their study.—I was only thinking about my Columbus letter. Was the texture of the paper all right? I had not examined that, perhaps, as critically as I should. It was in the cars, one hundred miles and more from Seville, that I first ventured to touch the precious package. I had dozed for a quarter of an hour. I had dreamt of those dark, sad eyes, those small shell-like ears with the brilliants sparkling in them, the crackling of her fan, when all semblance of her was obliterated by the thought that I had been robbed of my Columbus letter. I woke with a start. Horror! It was not there. Had I lost it? I must retrace my steps. No! It was safe, after all. It had only slipped around, and it was on my back.

I reached Paris. I made up my mind I would not show it. I dared not excite cupidity. Men had been murdered for something far less valuable than a Columbus letter by reckless book-hunters. I spent two days at the Bibliothèque. I read with dismay that there had been forgeries of this precious document. A cunning Pole had manufactured several of them which would have deceived his Satanic majesty.

I went to London. Here was an expert, the cleverest man in the world. I could trust him. I presented my precious document without a word. I was too much excited to speak. He neither hemmed nor hawed over it.

"It is genuine,—perfect,—all right. It is in better preservation than ours in the Grenville Library. Nine leaves,—twenty-seven lines to the page,—six wood-cuts. You have a treasure beyond price. Where on earth did you find it?"

Then only was my heart at rest about my "*De Insulis nuper inventis*."

I have since then, for this happened some few years ago, pondered over it all for many an hour. It has been my business to buy and sell books, not to keep them. Would it have been better for me never to have found this famous Columbus letter, or to have secured a greater happiness? Alas! I do not know. The precious leaves are still mine, dear to me because I think I made some great sacrifice in order to obtain them. As I look at them, they are just as fresh as ever. But

the South American lady? I wonder what swiftly-passing years have brought about for her.

As I study this grand relic, that tells for the first time in printed characters of the discovery of a new world, an event in comparison with which all others are of the uttermost insignificance, there waves over it a snow-white hand, making as if to me the gesture of an eternal adieu.

De insulis nuper inventis! The story of the islands newly found! Alas for that *mare tenebrosum* into which I may not have had the courage to plunge! Still, I took her at her word,—and was a fool. What happiness, what joy, might not have been mine! I might have been the discoverer of the fairest world man ever declared was his own, and by right of conquest.

I put back the carefully-bound volume, and as I lock my book-case there steals over my senses the faintest perfume of a rose, and I say, with a sigh, "It might have been worth while."

Barnet Phillips.

BLASÉ.

THE world has outlived all its passion;
 Its men are inane and blasé,
 Its women mere puppets of fashion;
 Life now is a comedy play.
 Our Abelard sighs for a season,
 Then yields with decorum to Fate;
 Our Heloise listens to reason,—
 And seeks a new mate.

Our Romeo's flippant emotion
 Grows pale as the summer grows old,
 And our Juliet proves her devotion
 By clasping—a cup filled with gold.
 Vain Antony boasts of love's favors
 From fair Cleopatra the frail,
 And the death of the sorceress savors
 Less of asps than of ale.

With the march of bold civilization
 Great loves and great faiths are down-trod ;
 They belonged to an era and nation
 All fresh with the imprint of God.
 High culture emasculates feeling ;
 The overtaught brain robs the heart ;
 And the shrine now where mortals are kneeling
 Is a commonplace mart.

By the lady-like minds of our mothers
 We are taught that to feel is "bad form ;"
 Our effeminate fathers and brothers
 Keep carefully out of life's storm ;
 Our worshippers, now, and our lovers,
 Are calmly devout—with their brains ;
 And we laugh at the man who discovers
 Warm blood in his veins.

* * * * *

But you, O twin souls, passion-mated,
 Who love as the gods loved of old,
 What blundering destiny fated
 Your lives to be cast in this mould ?
 Like a lurid volcanic upheaval
 In pastures prosaic and gray
 You seem, with your fervors primeval,
 Among us to-day.

You dropped from some planet of splendor,
 Perhaps, as it circled afar,
 And your constancy swerveless and tender
 You learned from the course of that star.
 Fly back to its bosom, I warn you,
 As back to the ark flew the dove :
 The minions of earth will but scorn you
 Because you can *love* !

Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

RENT AND TAXES.

THE State of Nebraska has now a magnificent opportunity to emancipate its people from taxation and to prove to the world that a state can live without taxes. It can do this without touching a vested interest, without changing the title to a dollar's worth of property, without doing a thing, in fact, that a private individual could not do and would not be wise in doing.

The United States government gave the State of Nebraska for educational purposes, mostly for the support of common schools, 2,838,124 acres of land. In every township the sixteenth and thirty-sixth square miles of the thirty-six square miles making a township were given to the State for the support of common schools. Besides this, 46,080 acres were given to aid the establishment of a State university, and 90,000 acres for the agricultural college.

The constitution of the State forbids the sale of these lands at less than seven dollars an acre. The commissioners are not obliged to sell at that price, but it appears from the State documents that it is usual to sell when the land reaches that value. Some of the school-land statistics of Nebraska are striking. In the six years following 1876, 160,190 acres of school lands were sold. In the two years 1883 and 1884, 267,173 acres were sold. I have no report later than 1884, as the reports are made only biennially. But, as nearly twice as much land was sold in the two years last reported on as in the previous six years, it is reasonable to suppose that half a million acres or more have been sold in the past two years. On December 1, 1884, there were under lease 953,638 acres, valued at \$2.49 an acre, or, in the aggregate, \$2,375,744. The annual rental was \$160,919, or a little less than seven per cent. At the same time there had been sold and were being paid for 461,407 acres of land, which yielded six per cent., or \$186,752, on the unpaid portion of the purchase-money, \$3,112,542. Money already received from land-sales is invested in securities that yield \$84,585 a year, making a total revenue to the State from school lands of \$432,256.

Why should the State sell any of these lands? Obviously, ownership is not necessary to cultivation. In six years following 1876 the State leased 659,501 acres, and in two years following 1882 it leased 687,471, or a greater amount in two years than in the previous six. The Commissioner of Public Lands and Buildings shows that since some little changes have been made in the laws there is no trouble

about collecting rents. Why should the State retain these lands while they are worth less than seven dollars an acre and individuals own them after they pass that figure? Who raises these wild prairie-lands to seven dollars an acre in value, and then to seventeen, and to more than seven hundred, it is safe to say, in the case of the town lots? The pioneer who settles down on a quarter-section of land in the middle of a wilderness and who never acquires any neighbors will plough and reap many seasons before he will see his land worth in the market seven dollars an acre, no matter how carefully he may have cultivated it or what comfortable buildings he may have erected. But if other people follow him,—if a community grows up around him, some men cultivating the soil, some selling goods, some carrying on the work of transportation, some working at trades,—the land rises in value to seven dollars an acre, and seventy dollars, and, it may be, seven thousand or seventy thousand dollars an acre; and if the rest of the community were industrious and prosperous and grew in numbers this land would rise in value just as fast if its owner were a loafer or a tramp as it would if he were a hard-working and exemplary citizen. No matter to whom the law may assign the increased value of that land, the fact is plain and unquestionable, that the value is created by the community in general. In Nebraska it is the community that is enhancing the value of those school lands from possibly one dollar and twenty-five cents an acre to seven dollars. During this time the community gets its portion of what it has created, for it receives for the maintenance of its schools an income whose increase is proportioned to the increased valuation. But at seven dollars an acre there is to be a change. The community is to go on increasing the value of these lands, but all the increased value is to go to a relatively small number of individuals. The income from the lands will increase in the same ratio as its value, but it will not go to its creator, the community: it will go to the fortunate or the farsighted person who bought, or whose ancestor bought, these lands at seven dollars an acre and calmly waited for other people to increase its value. As the community increases in size it will need increased school-accommodations: if the land-endowment were retained, this increased accommodation would be provided by the increased revenue from the leased lands. But, the lands having been sold, the people will have to be taxed to raise the necessary money, and the tenants on those lands given by the nation to the State for public purposes will have the pleasure of paying the private owners of the land its full commercial rental value, or what in Ireland is stigmatized as "rack-rent," and in addition thereto taxes to the State sufficient to build school-houses and employ teachers. Whereas, if the State were the landlord, it would use the rentals for

educational purposes, and there would be no tax, at least for school purposes.

The consent of the general government might be necessary to enable the State to use a part of the income of these lands for other than educational purposes, but if the schools were amply provided for this consent would probably be given. After deducting the lands already sold, the State owns some two and a half million acres of land, including non-educational lands. Within a very few years these lands will average in value twenty dollars an acre, amounting to fifty millions in all. The time is probably within sight when these lands will be worth fifty dollars an acre, or one hundred and twenty-five million dollars in all. A rental of five per cent. on that—it is now nearly seven per cent.—would yield six million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year, probably much more than the schools would demand, and the excess would support the State government without the levy of a tax.

Nebraska may well take warning from the city of Chicago, which like a spendthrift heir bartered a magnificent prospective income for a little present spending-money. The sixteenth or school section of the old town of Chicago is bounded by State, Madison, Halstead, and Twelfth Streets. It is a square mile in the heart of the great metropolis of the West. It was given by the nation whose property it was to the young municipality on whose enterprise and success its future value depended, to serve a great public purpose and supply that municipality with a revenue for the perpetual maintenance of common schools. With characteristic far-sightedness for individual interests, but with the blindness of moles for the interests of the community, the city of Chicago sold one hundred and thirty-eight of the one hundred and forty-two blocks into which this tract was divided, in 1833, for \$38,619. Of the four blocks that were saved from the sale, two were saved not as investments, but as sites for school-buildings. The schools, however, have retired to quieter and cheaper neighborhoods, and these blocks are now covered by business buildings that yield a revenue to the school fund. One of the blocks is among the most valuable in the city. It is bounded by State, Madison, Dearborn, and Monroe Streets, and among other expensive and handsome buildings that stand on it are the Chicago *Tribune* building and McVicker's Theatre. The ground-rentals are, I believe, six per cent. on the valuation assessed every ten years. Five years ago, when I had occasion to investigate the figures, this block was paying the school fund \$82,369 a year. So much of the school revenue was provided without taxation. The one hundred and thirty-eight blocks that were sold for \$38,619 can hardly be worth

less than fifty million dollars now, and the additional value was created by the whole city of Chicago. But the revenue from the tract, which is estimated at three millions, does not go to the school fund or to any other public purpose. It goes to private individuals, and the school fund gets the interest on the \$38,619. The present cost of the public school system is eleven or twelve hundred thousand dollars, and the total cost of the city government about four millions. The revenue from the school section would pay the total cost of the schools nearly three times over, and it would not fall very far short of supporting the entire city government without resort to taxation. But the public ownership of land, we are told, is socialistic, and so the people of Chicago are allowed the privilege of paying rent to private owners and taxes to the municipality, when the rent would abolish the taxes if it went to the municipality.

Land has very generally been recognized as an endowment for the good of the community in the early stages of the latter.* It is when individual enterprise gets the better of the public good that the land becomes private property and taxation becomes the chief end and aim of government. When the English conquered Bengal they found the land the property of the monarch,—that is, the state. The rents were collected by zemindars, who kept a portion as their pay and turned the rest over to the state as its revenue. The rents were not excessive; land was not rack-rented, but its rental was based on the necessities of the monarch instead of on the maximum mercantile value of the land. The English came, with their accursed ideas of the threefold division of population into landlords, tenants, and laborers, and practically made the zemindars a present of the lands on which they collected the state's revenue,—let them have for their private income almost the whole ground-rent. Then they assessed taxes upon the impoverished peasantry for the support of their government. It is hardly necessary to say that, the zemindars being now private landlords, their estates are generally rack-rented; while it is notorious that the peasantry are nearly taxed to death by the beneficent English officials, and taxation has made even salt such a luxury that it is not uncommon for people and cattle to suffer in health for the want of it. A writer in *The British Quarterly* for last April shows that the zemindars are paying less than fifteen million dollars a year, the same amount that was agreed on a century ago with Lord Cornwallis, while they are squeezing seventy million dollars a year out of the ryots, and the Indian government has to wring the missing fifty-five million dollars, or as much as it can get, out of the people by every device known to the most relentless tax-gatherer.

Japan has started in on the same road. In a report a few years ago Mr. Consul-General Van Buren said,—

“All the land of the empire was the emperor’s. Through the Shogun [Tycoon] it was granted to the military favorites for the maintenance of the military power. These favorites leased it in small divisions to the farmers, who held it at the pleasure of the lessors. So long as the lessee paid the stipulated price in produce he was left undisturbed. Such was the land-tenure up to 1868. Since that time the feudal institutions have been abolished, the land-tenure has been changed, and the land has been sold and is held in fee-simple. This great reform has infinitely bettered the condition of the farmer. About three-tenths of all tilled land is now in the possession of small proprietors, the balance being held in larger divisions.”

Seven-tenths of all the land in the empire was then in the private and absolute possession of great landlords and held as large estates; and yet free trade in land had only been in operation thirteen years when this was written.

The consul-general should have given a little more study to the history of land-ownership, or have waited longer for results to manifest themselves, before he was so confident about the beneficial results. The fact that he states is that the land belonged under the old régime to the state; that it was leased to military chiefs, who paid for it by military services and reimbursed themselves by collecting rents from their subtenants, but the land was not rack-rented. Now the rents are to go to private parties, and the expense of supporting the army will be met by the taxation of the very peasants who pay rent to the private landlords. Japan is indeed becoming Westernized; she has even borrowed Christian taxation. England knows the end of the road that Japan has just entered upon. At the Conquest, the land of England naturally became the property of the crown, which was the state. The crown made grants of land to nobles, but these grants were not in fee; the nobles were only tenants, paying for their land with military services, and the nobles had no right to bequeath their estates. They sublet to the small farmers, and so reimbursed themselves, but the net result to the community was that the people did not pay rent and taxes; they paid rent which supported the military portion, at least, of the government. Several generations elapsed before the noble tenants of the crown were strong enough to exact the right of bequeathing their estates. This right had been denied before because the lands might pass by bequest to women or invalids, who could render no military service, and the land of the nation was its military endowment. The invention of gunpowder revolutionized warfare and ushered in the era of standing

armies. The feudal nobles and their retainers were no longer of value in war. The nobles were no longer able to pay rent for their estates in military services, so they no longer had any right to the estates; but they were in possession, not only of the estates, but of the political powers of the nation, so they were not to be dislodged. An attempt was made to commute the military services into a land-tax that would probably have supported the British army, and so the nation's land would still have served as an endowment for national defence. But the land-holding nobles prevented this, and compromised on a land-tax to the state, which at the then valuation was pretty fair, but which was never to be increased, and it never has been. In the mean while population has increased; land-values have increased; rents have increased; the land-owners have large incomes for which they render no service to the state, and the tenants are permitted the exquisite luxury of paying the landlords rent for the state's land, and taxes to the state to support the army. If the British government now received ground-rent as originally assessed at four shillings in the pound of the rental, it would be able to remit nearly one-half of the taxes. But this assessment gave the state, the natural and original owner, only one-fifth of the ground-rents, while four-fifths went to the landlords, who no longer rendered any service to the state. Historically and equitably, therefore, the whole rental belongs to the state. If the state received it, it would be able to remit all taxes and reduce rents sixty per cent. A few hundred idle nobles and gentry would have to work for a living, and an industrious but for the most part poor people would find all the conditions of life vastly easier for them. The real question before Americans is not whether they will have a tenant class, but who the landlord class shall be. The tenant class is here in large proportions, in town and in country, and it is growing: the question is whether the people shall pay rent to private parties and taxes to the state, or rent to the state and no taxes. If the rentals were based on the necessities of the government, local and general, they would be low; if they were rented as high as possible, the state would have a revenue ample to enable it to undertake every public work, the desirability of which is conceded, but the expediency of which is denied so long as the money must be raised by taxation. In either event the community would come by its own, the increased value of land resulting from increased population. The actual users of the land would find the change beneficial, for they would not have to lock up large amounts of capital in land-ownership. The emancipation of the slaves impoverished only those Southern owners who needed to sell and suddenly found they had nothing to sell. The actual employers found

they could get laborers as cheaply as before, and without the necessity of investing a large capital in slaves. To the producing interests of the country the emancipation of the land would be equally beneficial.

But this is socialism, or something a great deal worse, we are told. Mr. John McDonnell, an English lawyer, who wrote on the nationalization of land before Henry George did, remarks, with great accuracy, "Socialism is nothing other than what the majority of the moment think society should not do, and what the minority of the moment think society should do."

Fred. Perry Powers.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES OF A CONGRESSIONAL CHAPLAIN.

I WAS born in Philadelphia, and when five years old received an accidental cut in the left eye from a sharp missile in the hand of a playmate of my own age. The injury was not a fatal one, and if the doctors had let me alone it is probable that I should have had the use of two good eyes for the rest of my life. After the wound healed it was covered by a slight scab, which the physician said must be removed by the use of nitrate of silver. This he applied in so large a quantity that the eye was seared as with a hot iron, and the sight went out forever. A fierce inflammation was set up, passed to the other eye, and with two blazing furnaces under my forehead I spent two years in a room dark as night, on a diet of gruel, mush and molasses, and rice, with almost daily doses of medicine, cuppings, leechings, and bleeding, administered after the heroic method of that time, the eyes kept constantly wet with a solution of sugar of lead. When I came out of the prison it was with a small fraction of the right eye, for the solution had left a deposit which, uniting with the lymph from the inflammation, had formed opacities in the cornea which in time blotted the sun from my sky and shut out from me the beauty of the world.

By the use of a shade over the eye, the middle finger of the right hand under it, to make a kind of artificial pupil, the book near the end of my nose, in a strong daylight I could see a single letter of good print, and, slowly bringing every letter of the line to the point on which the sight was fixed, I managed to spell my way through school and partly through college.

My father was an enterprising and successful merchant, but his business was overwhelmed by the financial crash of 1837, and in the

spring of the following year we set out to find a new home in Illinois, then the Far West. A journey of two weeks by rail, canal-boats, steamers, and stage-coach took us from Philadelphia to Jacksonville, a pretty village of fifteen hundred inhabitants, where our tent was pitched. The country was new; land not far from the town was then, and ten years after, bought for one dollar and twenty-five cents an acre; the people were enterprising, kindly, and hospitable. Every man's coat of arms bore the legend "Root, hog, or die." It was said to be a "good country for men and horses, but death to women and oxen." However that be, it was a good country for boys, for it taught them to depend upon and help themselves and not be ashamed of work. I learned to be my mother's housemaid, my father's clerk and book-keeper, to cut wood, make fires, set the table, get the breakfast, sweep the house, open the store, sell sugar, coffee, and "them molasses," or exchange these things for the butter, eggs, and chickens brought to town by the country-folk, and to pursue these varied occupations while studying Greek, Latin, and mathematics, with my bit of an eye, at school and college.

The narrowness of the opening by which knowledge might reach me from the printed page and what seemed my unfriendly surroundings whetted my appetite for information. With the shade drawn close about my brow, the book near the face, seated by the store door in pleasant weather, by a window when it was cold and stormy, so as to get the best light, I had to be ready to lay aside Euclid, Virgil, or Homer to wait upon a customer, count out a hundred dozen eggs, or trade for picked chickens. The posture in which I was obliged to sit in order to read, resting the elbows upon the knees, was unfriendly to a growing boy, and it told seriously upon my health. In February, 1843, my symptoms were so alarming that a council of doctors was called. After due examination, they said I had a curvature of the spine, malformation of the breast-bone, and an organic disease of the heart; that my earthly career would probably be run within six months; that the only thing to save me was to mount a horse and take regular out-door exercise. Peter Akers and Peter Cartwright, the most famous Methodist preachers of Illinois, had before this time suggested that I should enter the ministry, but I had begged that I "might tarry at Jericho until my beard grew," and gain a little intellectual outfit. Now they said, "There is the finger of Providence." The 1st of May saw me well mounted on a spirited horse, sold to my father by his late owner because he had been in the habit of running away with him or throwing him over his head,—a fact, however, which was not communicated at the time of the sale, indeed; not then held as necessary in a horse-trade. As I jogged alongside of my remarkable friend, Peter Akers, who had

taken me as Paul took Timothy, we reached the edge of an unfenced prairie, five miles wide, when it began to rain, and I started to raise an umbrella which my mother had kindly provided for me. My steed, seeming to think this an improper proceeding, began to run, and, unskilful rider as I was, my best efforts were required to keep my place in the saddle, and away went the umbrella, Father Akers shouting as well as he could for laughter, while I was quitting him at top speed, "Good-by, Billy ; I hope we shall meet again." Charlie and I did that five miles in twenty-five minutes. Brother Akers joined me an hour later. Charlie never ran away with me again. I spent a year and a half in the saddle, preaching, or trying to do so, once or twice almost every day in the week and three times on Sunday, riding two or three hundred miles a month, committing to memory every day some parts of the Bible and hymn-book, carrying in my saddle-bags the best books I could get hold of and studying them as I could find time and place. My preaching-places were usually log cabins, used by the early settlers for their homes, my pulpit a split-bottomed chair, the congregation sometimes composed, in corn-planting or harvest time, of three or four mothers in Israel, dressed in homespun, with check aprons in front, and coal-scuttle sun-bonnets on their heads. When the young brother stood up to begin the service, the old ladies would deposit their pipes in the fireplace, and, disposing their chairs on the puncheon floor, would assume the air of a waiting assembly while he read the hymns and Scripture lessons from memory. Close to me as my hearers often were, I never saw any one to whom I spoke : a veil of darkness has always hung between my fellow-men and me.

The graduates of "Brush College and Swamp Divinity School" had a severe course of training ; but the schooling is wholesome. If they do not learn to know human nature, to speak to men and women in a direct, practical, and earnest way, the fault is their own. Cold and hunger, loneliness and weariness, hard fare and harder beds, floods and tempests, are stern professors, but the curriculum they enforce should at least develop manliness.

After another year spent in St. Louis, I was sent by the bishop upon a mission to try and gather funds in the Eastern cities to help a struggling college for boys and start one for girls. An old and valued friend offered to go with me as travelling companion.

We left Cincinnati, in the steamer *Hibernia*, on a Friday morning in November, 1845, the captain promising to land us at Wheeling by Saturday night. The boat was crowded, and among the passengers was a number of Congressmen, members of both Houses, on their way to the capital to take their seats. I cannot say how I was shocked

nor how indignant I became at discovering that not a few of these representatives of the sovereign people of the United States swore outrageously, played cards day and night, and drank villanous whiskey to excess.

The river was low. Fogs came on. Sunday morning arrived: we were yet eighty miles below Wheeling, and there was no place where we could land to spend the Lord's day. At breakfast-time a committee of the passengers waited upon me to know if I would preach to them. Never did I say yes more gladly; for never had I been so anxious to speak my mind. A congregation of nearly three hundred persons assembled at half-past ten o'clock, and I took my stand between the ladies' and gentlemen's cabins. Seated in the places of honor upon my right and left hand were the members of Congress. At the close of the discourse I could not resist the impulse to speak a straightforward word to the men on my right and left: turning to them, therefore, I said, "I understand that you are members of the Congress of the United States, and as such you are, or should be, the representatives not only of the political opinions but also of the intellectual, moral, and religious condition of the people of this country. As I had rarely seen men of your class, I felt on coming aboard this boat a natural interest to hear your conversation and to observe your habits. If I am to judge the nation by you, I can come to no other conclusion than that it is composed of profane swearers, card-players, and drunkards.

"Suppose there should be an intelligent foreigner on this boat travelling through the country with the intent of forming a well-considered and unbiassed opinion as to the practical working of our free institutions: seeing you and learning your position, what would be his conclusion? Inevitably, that our experiment is a failure and our country is hastening to destruction. Consider the influence of your example upon the young men of the nation,—what a school of vice you are helping to keep up. If you insist upon the right of ruining yourselves, do not by your example corrupt and debauch those who are the hope of the land. I must tell you that as an American citizen I feel disgraced by your behavior; as a preacher of the gospel I am commissioned to tell you that unless you renounce your evil courses, repent of your sins, and believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ with hearts unto righteousness, you will certainly be damned."

At the close of the service I retired to my state-room, to consider my impromptu address word by word, and whether if I were called to a reckoning I should be willing to abide by it and its consequences. Plain speaking and stern acting were common things among the men of the West and the Southwest, and whosoever started to run a race of

this kind must be prepared to go unflinchingly to the goal. I came to the conclusion that nothing had been said of which I ought to be ashamed, and that I would stand by every word of it, let the issue be what it might. Just then there was a tap at the door. A gentleman entered, who said, "I have been requested to wait upon you by the members of Congress on board, who have had a meeting since the close of your sermon. They desire me to present you with this purse" (handing me between fifty and one hundred dollars) "as a token of their appreciation of your sincerity and fearlessness in reproving them; they have also desired me to ask if you will allow your name to be used at the coming election of chaplain to Congress. If you will consent to this, they are ready to assure you an honorable election." Stunned by this double message, I asked time for reflection and to consult with my friend.

My new friends went on to Washington, and I tarried in Wheeling to preach: they secured my election, their money paid my expenses to the capital, and I entered upon my duties as chaplain to Congress.

These duties were simple enough,—to open the two Houses of Congress with prayer daily, and to preach in the Hall of Representatives on Sunday morning. There were two of us to perform them. From the foundation of the government until a few years ago the chaplains were chosen under a joint resolution of the two Houses, each electing a man to serve alternately. That rule has now been dropped, and the preaching in the Hall of Representatives has been abolished, by whom I know not, nor for what purpose.

As I then officiated as much in one House as in the other, my relations with the members of both were equally agreeable and friendly. It was a rare opportunity for a youth of twenty-two to be brought so close to the leading men of the government. The Senate then occupied the chamber where the Supreme Court now sits, and the House met in what is called Statuary Hall. It is probable that the smaller size of those apartments had something to do with the style of parliamentary oratory then in vogue, now almost unknown.

The chair of the Senate was then occupied by Mr. George M. Dallas, of Pennsylvania, elected Vice-President on the ticket with James K. Polk, of Tennessee. He was urbane and courtly; his abundant hair, white as wool, was a beautiful crown to his graceful person; and his dignified, high-bred manner seemed to fit him peculiarly for his place. Here is one instance of his good breeding. The State of Arkansas was represented at that time by Messrs. Ashley and Sevier, who were in the habit of pronouncing its name differently,—Arkansas and *Arkansaw*. In recognizing them upon the floor, Mr.

Dallas never failed to say, "The Senator from Arkansas," or "The Senator from Arkansas," according to each man's use of the accent.

The solemn hush that pervaded the Senate-Chamber betokened the grave decorum of the fifty men who stood with their gray heads bowed reverently, as a beardless boy commended them to the care and guidance of the God of nations.

Among those who have filled a prominent place in the nation's eye, there were Messrs. Dix and Dickinson, of New York, John M. Clayton, of Delaware, Reverdy Johnson, of Maryland, W. P. Mangum and G. E. Badger, of North Carolina, McDuffie, of South Carolina, Berrien, of Georgia, Dixon H. Lewis, of Alabama, Crittenden, of Kentucky, Corwin, of Ohio, Hannegan and Bright, of Indiana, Atchison and Benton, of Missouri, Cass, of Michigan, Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania, and John Davis, of Massachusetts. To these were added during the session, from the new State Texas, General Houston and Mr. Rusk. But high over all their colleagues in authoritative influence and general estimation towered Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun, two of the immortal triumvirate of the Senate. Mr. Clay had resigned his seat in 1842.

The chair of the House was filled by J. W. Davis, of Indiana, and here are the names of some of the men who sat on the floor: Henry W. Hilliard, William L. Yancey, of Alabama; Howell Cobb, A. H. Stephens, Robert Toombs, of Georgia; E. D. Baker, Stephen A. Douglas, John A. McClernand, John Wentworth, of Illinois; Robert D. Owen, of Indiana; Linn Boyd, Garret Davis, of Kentucky; John Slidell, of Louisiana; Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine; Amos Abbott, John Quincy Adams, Julius Rockwell, R. C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts; Jefferson Davis, Jacob Thompson, of Mississippi; Sterling Price, of Missouri; Washington Hunt, Preston King, of New York; Columbus Delano, Joshua Giddings, Robt. C. Schenck, Allen G. Thurman, Saml. F. Vinton, of Ohio; Chas. J. Ingersoll, Alexander Ramsey, David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania; R. Barnwell Rhett, of South Carolina; Milton Brown, Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee; Jacob Collamer, Geo. P. Marsh, of Vermont; R. M. T. Hunter, John S. Pendleton, of Virginia; and Augustus C. Dodge, of Iowa Territory.

My fancy had pictured the Capitol as an Olympian summit, where the greater and lesser gods held their festivals and dispensed their favors. The debates of the two Houses were to furnish me an endless fund of entertainment and instruction. What was Hebe's nectar to that which I should quaff from the glittering chalice of Congressional discussion? I had heard a great deal of speaking—good, bad, and indifferent—from the stumps and pulpits of prairie-land; but here, with

the flower of the nation in council, I should enjoy a repast whose delicacies could never cloy and whose abundance could never fail. But our ideals fade away into thin air when brought to the touchstone of experience, and disappointment is the common lot. The first effect of life in Washington for a young enthusiast is that of disenchantment; and he must become familiar with the routine of business and inured to the commonplaces and platitudes of speeches for "Buncombe" before he is thoroughly prepared to enjoy the gladiatorship of the Capitol. It was mortifying to see an honorable Representative speaking to "a beggarly array of empty seats," while even such of his colleagues as were present seemed to treat him and his discourse with utter contempt, engaged as they were in writing, reading newspapers, chatting jovially, or even lunching.

In the days of Hamilton, Madison, and Jay, public opinion was created by a few men, and Congress represented an oligarchy. But now the multitude claims its rights. We have become a nation of newspaper readers. Every man affects to be informed upon the questions of the day; and every Congressional speech delivered to an inattentive and listless House is nevertheless read by some thousands of the speaker's constituents and political adherents. The fitness of their audience might compensate the fathers of the Republic for its smallness; its ample size must satisfy our contemporaries for its want of quality.

Congress must be for some time to come less and less a theatre of high debate, more and more a kind of lyceum for the delivery of lectures on current topics, usually addressed to hundreds, sometimes to millions, of listeners. The intellect of Congress now has the lightning harnessed as its post-horse, and the symbol of the age is a saucy news-boy straddling a telegraph-wire, shouting, "Herald, Tribune, World, and Times!"

Forty years have passed since the date of my first chaplaincy. I was called to the place again in 1853. Clay, Webster, Calhoun, and their contemporaries were gone; Seward, Chase, Sumner, and their associates had come to the front. Abraham Lincoln had served one term in the lower House.

The Mexican war broke out during my first term of office: the Republican party was born in my second.

I am here again, after an interval of more than thirty years. Not a man has a seat in Congress who filled it when I was first here, and but two or three when I was here the second time. Three generations of our public men have passed away since I was first chaplain to Congress.

W. H. Milburn.

GENERAL JOHN A. LOGAN.

EARLY in the present century an Irish gentleman named Logan, of good family and education, emigrated to this country and took up his residence in Maryland. His son, who had already studied medicine in the north of Ireland, accompanied him, completed his studies here, and formed his first American tie by marrying a young lady from Baltimore, who bore him one daughter and soon after died. The tide of progress towards the West seemed to be setting largely in the direction of Illinois, and young Dr. Logan, left almost alone in the world, decided to try his fortunes in what was then known to many people as the Country of Black Hawk, since the Indians still retained possession of a large tract of land in the Western States. Dr. Logan went to Jackson County, influenced, no doubt, by his friendship with the lieutenant-governor of the State, A. M. Jenkins, and purchased a farm near Brownsville. In the family of Mr. Jenkins Dr. Logan was welcomed as a constant visitor and chosen friend, and in that wild pioneer country we can fancy the pleasure experienced by the cultured young Irishman in the friendship of Mr. Jenkins's sister,—a girl who is described as possessing sterling qualities of mind and heart, educated far beyond the average woman of the day, keen, discriminating, strong in feeling, and yet perfectly self-controlled; one to whom a deviation from the literal truth was impossible, but with a nature so full of sympathy for her fellow-beings that a harsh judgment of any one could not linger. I fain would pause longer on such recollections of Elizabeth Jenkins as have been given me, had I space, since only she and one other woman ever influenced John A. Logan's life,—the mother with her brave enduring spirit and her fine purpose in the midst of the hardships of pioneer life in the West, and the wife who at sixteen began to fit herself to be the companion of her husband's political career, and who, after Fort Donelson, was capable of nursing her husband and his comrades in the hospital which the tremendous battle had made necessary and of sending him as her hero back into the thick of the fight.

Blest with parents who united perfectly harmonious qualities of heart and mind, John Alexander Logan, their eldest child, was born February 9, 1826. The commodious log farm-house in which he first saw the light and where he passed his childhood was standing until recently, giving evidences of comfort and even of what in those days in Illinois might have been regarded almost as luxury. Dr. Logan

had the entire practice of the county. He was a man who liked room for his books, his writing-table, his globes and maps, to say nothing of his surgery, but had neither taste nor inclination for anything in life which took him away from his own fireside after his duties of the day were over. Consequently, the children of the family had the advantage of association from their earliest years with their father. He was democratic in his ideas almost to fanaticism, making a boast of the fact that when a choice lay between a hard-working poor patient and an idle rich one he decided unfalteringly in favor of the first. Many anecdotes are still told of his entire disregard for aristocratic prejudices. All of this, however, did not interfere with his respect for scholarship and intellect. The schools of the State were limited and at a distance from Brownsville. The clever doctor took his eldest boy's training into his own hands, teaching him Latin and Greek, reading to and with him, and opening to his mind in early boyhood pictures of classical heroism which must have fired a spirit already evincing military impulses and notably patriotic.

The lad is described as of an ardent temperament, fiery, impetuous, and daring. Every trait of character developed—almost rough-hewn—in maturity was evinced in the child. Whether he was helping a miller to replace a broken belting, or leading his comrades in an adventure on a raft, Logan, boy and man, proved himself equal to swift emergencies, always thoughtful in the midst of vehemence and intrepid whether the danger lay in the enemy's fire or in a fault of his own to be conquered almost as quickly as it was recognized.

The amusements of Logan's boyhood were all of a character calculated to develop his physical strength and to make him fearless. Dr. Logan was passionately fond of fox-hunting. In the Illinois of those days, where a "bag-man" was not known, the finding and the pursuit of the fox were genuine work.

Young Logan was early accustomed to the saddle and the gun. An amusing instance connected with the use of the latter is related by one who knew him at the time. A certain corn-field belonging to the doctor had been injured by the squirrels which abounded in the neighborhood, and Mrs. Logan sent her boys to try and drive the little invaders off the ground.

A short distance down the road stood a tree against whose bold trunk the notices for the townspeople were tacked up, and a countryman riding by a few hours after Mrs. Logan's charge to her sons paused to read a freshly-written announcement in the familiar place. Presently the man woke the echoes with his laughter, for in a large, boyish scrawl were the following words :

"I give notice to all the Squirrels to keep out of this Cornfield. If they don't they will be shot.

"JOHN A. LOGAN."

Years later, when a secret society with Confederate interests at heart tried by threats and cajolements to entice young Logan to join their ranks, he sent them a message not unlike his boyish one to the squirrels:

"If you fellows don't keep out of the Knights of the Golden Circle you will be strung up."

At sixteen years of age Logan entered Shiloh College, having been so well grounded in the classics by his father that he passed creditable examinations and quickly took a prominent place.

His college days lacked many of the advantages offered young men of to-day. The variety afforded students at present was wanting, but the Shiloh boys contrived to enjoy themselves; and young Logan, who could never go half-heartedly into anything, was prominent in all college sports and festivities, whether he was carrying out some plan for general amusement, or giving an entertainment to which the music of his violin lent a charm, or conducting a spirited debate in which his patriotism was always alert and his sentences even then forcible and dramatic.

From college life and its well-earned scholastic triumphs young Logan passed almost directly into the thick of the swift warfare with Mexico, which may be said to have formed most of the military chiefs who afterwards led the armies, North and South, in the campaigns of the Rebellion. Over many a camp-fire fifteen years later men who had fought in Mexico side by side almost as boys sat now as commanders, discussing those old days, sighing, doubtless, for friends of "lang syne" against whom they were now doing battle.

Among the list of men governing the army under General Taylor we find Jefferson Davis in command of the regiment of Mississippi Volunteers, while Generals Fremont, Kearny, Wool, Sherman, Thomas, Reynolds, French, Lee, Ewell, McClellan, and Beauregard were prominent in the series of brilliant victories whereby the American flag was carried into the heart of the Mexican country. Among these comrades young Logan, of the 1st Illinois Volunteers, soon distinguished himself. A painting made of him about this time shows us a face whose boyish outline is strongly in contrast with the features familiar to us in the hero of Donelson, Champion Hills, and Atlanta, though there is the same resolution about the mouth and eyes and the same look of intelligent purpose combined with sweetness of expression.

that was an inheritance from Logan's mother. He had no idea of pursuing a military career: therefore his zeal in the Mexican war was simply the outcome of that pure-minded patriotism which distinguished the man whether his services were given on the field of battle or in the halls of the Senate. His personal inclination was entirely for a legal life. The facilities for study of the law in those days in the West were limited unless the student threw himself heart and soul into the necessities of his work; but Logan was not one to shirk study where there was a desirable result in view. Returning from the Mexican war, he at once entered the office of his uncle, A. M. Jenkins, the former lieutenant-governor of the State, and an evidence of his entire devotion to the work in hand is given in the fact of his declining a public office simply because its duties would interfere with his legal studies.

At this time a friendship destined to bring about the most important influence in Logan's career dominated his life. One of his comrades in arms before the walls of Churubusco had been a gentleman from Jackson County, named Cunningham. His grandfather, Robert Cunningham, of Virginia, had done valiant service in the war of independence. The republic established, he removed to Tennessee, and later to Illinois, which was still a Territory. There he gave papers of freedom to all his slaves.

Captain John M. Cunningham, grandson of the Revolutionary officer, served first in the Black Hawk War, and, after representing his county in the legislature of Illinois, entered the army that marched directly into Mexico. Here he met young Logan, whose boyish qualities endeared him to the older man, and when Logan studied law and took up his residence once more in Illinois the Cunninghams welcomed him cordially as an intimate friend of their family. The oldest daughter in that happy home circle was about eleven years of age when Logan first saw her, but, as she has said herself, she cannot remember a time when the cares of womanly thought were not pressing upon her. While her father was braving the perils of war or the privations of a miner's life in the Sierras, Mary Cunningham was her mother's main stay in the little household. After the victories in Mexico the child was permitted to listen to long talks between her father and the young man whom he regarded as a hero, who with his rich voice and forcible eloquence seemed to her the embodiment of a noble ideal. But when after some years Logan returned to Shawneetown, found the child grown into a tall, happy-looking, laughter-loving girl of fifteen, and fell desperately in love with her, Miss Cunningham was startled and surprised. Her hero was her hero still, but the idea of his having been transformed into her lover bewildered her. Frank

and honest in love as in war, with all the chivalrous side of his nature apparent, he talked to the young girl of his devotion in terms which showed her that his love as a husband would be the bulwark and defence of her life. From her he went to the father, pleading earnestly that the question of Mary's youth might be overlooked. The wooing was successful.

At sixteen Mary Cunningham became a wife. Self-poised as the circumstances of her life had made her, capable even then of discriminating judgment beyond her years, and above all things reverent and pure in her ideas of a woman's loyalty to the man who had vowed to cherish and protect her, the young girl stepped at once into the position of chosen companion and counsellor of her husband, happy in the fact that from first to last his schemes of life involved nothing which would put her fine sense of honor to the blush. The faculty, not common in a woman's nature, of seizing upon the salient points in any question and working therefrom logically, with no frittering away of impulses or sentiments in merely side-issues, has formed the key-note of Mrs. Logan's sweet and successful life. The qualities of heart and mind which have enabled her to understand and do good service for her fellow-beings concentrated their force naturally in all labors connected with her husband's career, and the bond of feeling between the two was never shadowed. The lute that held the music of their lives never knew a rift.

Logan's political rise was rapid. He had been made prosecutor of the pleas in Illinois before his marriage, he was soon after sent to the State legislature, and in 1856 he was elected to Congress as a Douglas Democrat.

His association with the civil war began with the first demonstration that force against the South was needed. He had tried to avert the terrible calamity; but when it was apparent that only by bloodshed could the Union be preserved, he made good his assertion that if necessary "he would shoulder his musket to have Abraham Lincoln inaugurated." Dramatic scenes in the lives of individuals in that day were numerous, but often passed unheard of and unseen. Logan, who was then in Congress, watched one day from the Capitol building the long lines of troops carrying their bayonets among the proud display of stars and stripes, and listened to the roll of the drums and the music of the fifes playing "Three Cheers for the Red, White, and Blue," and the air even then known as "John Brown's Body." Returning from this stirring sight to his place in the House, Logan found that his heart and soul had been shaken to their depths by the illustration given him of the country's emergency. Could he sit still and silent when the

nation was at war? Saying little of his purpose, he hastily grasped his hat, and, leaving the halls of Congress, overtook the troops before they got outside of Washington, securing from Colonel Richardson a musket and a private's place in the ranks. From the very threshold of the Capitol he marched to Bull Run; and one who saw him there speaks of the man as so prominent on that disastrous battle-field, whether loading a musket with bloody hands or helping a wounded or dying comrade, that he was lost in wonderment as to who this distinguished-looking and energetic volunteer might be. Later they met at Fort Donelson, clasping hands as comrades, though one was then a subordinate and the other in command.

From Bull Run Logan hastened back to Washington, where the mingling of depression and excitement among the people fired him with determination to do all that was possible to stimulate the West, and, if necessary, force troops to the relief of our army. He appointed a time for addressing the people at his place of residence in Marion, Illinois; and at this turning-point those best qualified to judge do not hesitate to say that the whole feeling of the Southwest depended upon Logan's attitude towards the people. Mrs. Logan was in Marion, and when the hour appointed for his arrival had come with no tidings from her husband she was naturally intensely anxious. A vast concourse had assembled to hear him speak, and already signs of tumult and disfavor were evident among those who were regarded as Southern sympathizers. Saying what she could to the crowd near her house, Mrs. Logan took a horse and buggy and drove rapidly ten miles to Carbondale, to meet her husband or find out, if possible, the cause of his delay. She found that the train on which he was bound from Washington had not appeared, and, driving back, she quieted the angry people, promising them that her husband would certainly be on hand to address them within a few hours. Undaunted by her exertions or the weather, she returned to Carbondale once more and waited for him. Scarcely a word was exchanged between them before he sprang into the buggy at her side, understanding the tact and wifely devotion which had prompted her journey, and they dashed back in hot haste to Marion. Here he stood up in the carriage and addressed the people, whose sympathies vacillated so that Logan was compelled to use his most decisive eloquence, declaring that it was his determination to enter the service of the State as a private if need be, or in whatever capacity he could serve his country best. "I shall defend the old blood-stained flag," he announced, "over every foot of land in the Union." *

* This account is authorized by Mrs. Logan, January 22, 1887.

Ten days later, on September 13, 1861, the 31st Illinois Volunteers was organized, with John Alexander Logan as its first colonel.*

The regiment became part of General McClelland's brigade, and saw its first fighting at Belmont, scarcely two months later, when Logan's horse was shot beneath him and the pistol at his side shattered by rebel bullets. Forts Henry and Donelson followed, the latter demonstrating Logan's capacity as a military commander. Undismayed by the brave defence of the fort, he led his men on, urging them upon the ramparts, and only failing in active fight when too much weakened by his wounds to raise his voice or sword. There was little question among those about him that Logan's daring and bravery did most for the successful issue of that battle.

In vain thy ramparts, Donelson,
The living torrent bars:
It leaps the wall, the fort is won,
Up go the Stripes and Stars.

Thy proudest mother's eyelids fill,
As dares her gallant boy,
And Plymouth Rock and Bunker Hill
Yearn to thee, Illinois!

Wounded severely, Logan was compelled to remain some time in the hospital of the fort, where his wife nursed him and where such care as could be given made his period of captivity endurable. He insisted upon returning to active service before his wounds were fully healed, and during Grant's Northern Mississippi campaign—1862-63—he was promoted as major-general of volunteers, and subsequently was given the command of the Third Division, Fifteenth Army Corps, under General McPherson. He assisted in the movements upon Vicksburg and Port Gibson, and, in General Grant's opinion, saved the day at Raymond by his unflinching daring; while at Champion Hill he may be said to have made a leap into the position he thenceforward held among the soldiers and the people.

Champion Hill is not one of the famous battles; perhaps it will never illumine the page of history or the canvas of the painter; but its story is unique in the record of the civil war. Overpowering statistics are not needed to prove a conflict desperate or a victory brilliant, and at Champion Hill, May 16, 1862, Logan demonstrated his peculiar abilities: his daring, which was never bravado, never thoughtlessness of his men; his capacity for endowing a hopeless situation with something of his own personal courage; let us say briefly, his sublime faith

* Official Reports.

in the "survival of the fittest," which he took into the great issue and brought forth strengthened and made clear.

At this battle General Grant, intensely anxious as to the progress of the fray, dispatched one of his staff to Logan, demanding if he could not "push some men forward a little."

To the commander-in-chief came the answer so famous since, although its origin is so little known that we may be pardoned for quoting it here :

"Tell General Grant my division can whip all the rebels this side of hell, and we will push forward till he gives orders to halt."

From this point we must hasten on to the decisive events of Atlanta, which involved so much for both North and South, which placed in the Federal hands the stronghold, as it were, of rebellion,—which witnessed one of the saddest losses on our records, the death of General McPherson,—and which bore testimony to the bravery, the loyalty, and the devotion of General Logan. The story of the battle has been officially reported, discussed, and called back to the memory of those brave men who took part in it, but there are many points of what I may call personal interest which have not been gathered together for publication. Twenty-three years have elapsed since that day of desperate conflict, but, fortunately, many survive who can recall events connected with the day and the scenes thereof which possibly were overlooked in the first rush of conflicting, painful, or triumphant memories. It will not be possible even to enumerate all of those who were most valiant in the action. The story which I am telling is mainly that of one life, and to those who seek statistics and purely technical details the official reports are open ; but for the benefit of many who may not understand the position of the national army between July 20 and the eventful 22d I will try to make as clear a statement as possible, having as my authorities officers of high rank and ability who have been kind enough to put me in possession of needed facts and who have verified my statements.

The capture of Atlanta was the result of the battle of July 22, 1864, fought by the armies of the Tennessee, Cumberland, and Ohio, under Generals Sherman, McPherson, Logan, Thomas, and Schofield, and the Confederates under Generals Hood, Hardee, Cheatham, and Wheeler.

On the 17th of July Jefferson Davis dispatched to General Johnston, then in command of his army, an order which resulted in Johnston's relief from the command of the army and department of Tennessee. In Hood's opinion, Johnston's policy was Fabian ; but the Union generals considered it most sagacious.

Hood and McPherson were thereby placed in strange relationship to each other. Friends from boyhood, class- and room-mates for two years at West Point, they naturally understood each other's methods of thought or action better than any other men in the army, and there is no doubt that in spite of their strong bond of friendship both men were roused to do their most skilful work when the competition was so close. A direct change of tactics was made by Hood, who on the 20th of July made a desperate attack upon the Army of the Cumberland at Peach Tree Creek at a point nearly north of Atlanta. The Confederates having been repulsed, McPherson and Blair then moved slowly out of Decatur, leaving Sprague's brigade in charge of the railway there, with orders to stop all trains, one of Sherman's principal ideas in this campaign being to destroy the Augusta Railroad. McPherson was strongly desirous that the Seventeenth Corps, commanded by General Frank P. Blair, should carry Bald Hill (before Atlanta), which was fully fortified and occupied by the enemy. Blair, acting on McPherson's advice, sent instructions to General Leggett, commanding the Third Division, to make the attempt. But the orders did not reach him in time. Night came on, and Bald Hill remained in the enemy's possession, with our troops closed up against it. On the afternoon of the 20th, about three miles out of Decatur, General Blair's corps, which had the advance, struck the enemy's infantry in considerable force. A sharp engagement followed, during which General W. Q. Gresham was severely wounded, and General Giles A. Smith succeeded him in command of the Fourth Division. The fight lasted until nightfall, and the enemy was forced into his works at Bald Hill. On the 21st, General Hickenlooper, chief of artillery, was sent by McPherson to urge on the attack, the heaviest work falling upon General Manning F. Force's brigade, which held the left of General Sherman's army. The position they occupied brought them squarely in front of Bald Hill, on the main right flank of the enemy. The slope of the hill was steep and bare, so that the enemy's skirmishers and sharpshooters had every advantage; but the only officer who dashed up the hill was General Force, leading the first line of infantry in person. The 16th Wisconsin and the 20th and 31st Illinois, directed by Captain Walker, followed. The charge was successful. The Federals gained possession of Bald Hill, which was a key-point commanding the country in every direction.

We have now to consider the position of the army on the night of July 21. It must be understood, of course, that the prominence given to General Logan's division is because the events of the day are of peculiar interest to us in considering his life. Only a careful historian

could calculate the deeds of bravery, the exhibitions of skill, the individual efforts, which went to make up the story of that terrific conflict. Leggett's division on the night of the 21st held Bald Hill. On the left the Fourth Division of the Sixteenth Corps, commanded by General Fuller, bivouacked on two lines. At the foot of the hill General Giles Smith's division fortified the position, while between this intrenched line of the Seventeenth Corps and Leggett's division Battery C, Second United States Artillery, was placed. The Fifteenth Corps, commanded by Major-General John A. Logan, bivouacked along the Augusta Railroad. The men lay on their arms, the brigades encamping parallel, or nearly so, to the road. One division or more was thrown to the front and connected with the Seventeenth Corps, thus forming a strong line along the railroad. The head-quarters of General Dodge were directly in the rear of the right of Logan's corps, and here the Second Division, commanded by Sweeney, bivouacked. The head-quarters of General McPherson were established on the south side of the railroad, a short distance below Logan's camp, and about two miles, or perhaps less, from the front. A portion of the artillery of the Army of the Tennessee was parked along the railroad and to the south of it, while the remainder of the train was at Decatur, well guarded by the Second Brigade, Fourth Division, Sixteenth Corps, under the command of General Sprague.

The heat of that July was intense. During the fight on the barren hill-side three staff-officers in Force's brigade alone were prostrated by sunstroke. The hill was strongly fortified by the Union troops, and from its summit in the glare of the summer sun Atlanta might be seen. Just within the city's defences, and in direct range of Leggett's guns, was a large rolling-mill.

Hood's flanks were deemed insecure, and he retired from the Peach Tree line in the night. This diversion, with other movements, led General Sherman to the belief that the enemy were leaving Atlanta. About daybreak on the morning of July 22 a scout appeared at General McPherson's head-quarters while the latter was watching with intense interest a sharp and brilliant contest between a portion of the Seventeenth Corps (General Giles Smith's division) and the enemy. He turned from his observation to receive an Atlanta newspaper from the hands of the scout, which contained the farewell order from General Joseph Johnston to the Confederate Army of the Tennessee, relinquishing the command to General Hood. Sherman was already aware of this fact, but had not as yet had time to communicate it to McPherson. While that officer was reading the printed statement, the commander-in-chief, with some of his staff, was reconnoitring the country near his

head-quarters and determining upon his action for the day. McPherson, roused by what he felt was a critical moment, immediately set about planning for a day which he now knew would be desperate. While it was impossible for him not to feel certain heart-throbs at the thought of this close contest on the field of battle with the man who had been to him as a brother, he knew precisely the sort of military opponent he had to deal with,—knew that Hood would fight desperately and with every possible unexpected turn. Hood, witnessing the capture of Bald Hill the day before, had uttered significant words: "he would exchange the Fabian tactics of Johnston for the aggressive policy of Stonewall Jackson." And the losses at Peach Tree Creek, the capture of Bald Hill, inspired in such a man only new impetus and more desperate valor.

Sherman, confident that a pursuit to the south and east of Atlanta was necessary, dispatched Colonel Warner with orders which were in turn to be forwarded to Logan. In that anxious daybreak, Logan, early astir, was as sure as McPherson and Sherman were that a critical moment was impending. It was not possible for one of his nature and ardent temperament to ignore trifles, especially when they bore upon an issue so stupendous. Moving from one point to another in that summer dawn, watchful of everything that could have a bearing on the strength, the courage, or the hope of his division, he made his presence vitally felt and stimulated his men by his own indomitable spirit. One of his subordinates recalls him, a strong figure outlined against the flush of the morning sky, his face, to be seen later in that awful day flashing fire and "the vengefulness of a righteous indignation," then pale and composed, the intensity of the dark eyes alone showing what he must have felt. He was on his way to make sure that his famous black stallion "Charley" was in readiness, and returning to his headquarters was met by the messenger of General McPherson.

The order read as follows: "You will immediately put your command in pursuit to the south and east of Atlanta, without entering the town. You will take a route to the left of that taken by the enemy, and try to cut off a portion of them while they are pressed in the rear, on our right, by Generals Schofield and Thomas. Major-General Sherman expects a vigorous pursuit."

Had the enemy's action been such as the commander-in-chief and his staff supposed it would be, no plan of opposing action could have been more sagacious. But McPherson and his chief of staff, Assistant Adjutant-General (then Colonel and since General) Clark, with others of his staff, had reason to believe that the city was in a position of defence. The midnight order to encompass the left flank of the Federal army had reached McPherson by this time, and after a brief discussion,

well knowing that no time was to be lost, McPherson and his staff rode over to Logan's head-quarters, where all decided that the enemy was still in possession of Atlanta and consequently that different tactics must be used. An immediate course of action was planned, after which McPherson, Colonel Clark, and several officers rode back to Sherman's head-quarters and received the full commission of the commander-in-chief to act upon this change of plan.

About eleven o'clock in the morning, McPherson and his staff, accompanied by some officers from Logan's head-quarters, were returning towards the railroad and the scene which later was the field of battle. The road now presents few evidences of the past in the picturesque suburban town of Edgewood. The landmarks of the fearful battle are obliterated; but I understand a cyclorama has been prepared, under the superintendence of the officers best qualified to judge of accuracy in detail, and an admirable view of this point is given, interesting not only because of what followed later in the day, but also because it was the last spot on earth on which McPherson talked to his friends,—the last place where that kindly face was seen, where that genial voice was heard. In telling me the story of that dreadful day, General Clark recalled McPherson's fine appearance, seated on his horse in the sunshine of the summer morning. After lunch, cigars were handed around, and McPherson was enjoying one, when there came suddenly the sounds of a volley and a shell, announcing the attack which McPherson had feared. Everything had seemed quiet along the entire line until that moment, and McPherson had written a letter in pencil to General Dodge, with directions based upon his recent interview with the commander-in-chief, which referred particularly to the railroad between that point and Decatur. General Logan and staff, and General Blair and staff, were present, and of McPherson's staff the adjutant-general and chief, Colonel W. T. Clark; Hickenlooper, chief of artillery; Reese, chief engineer; Captain Hilburn; Knox, Rose, signal officer; Dr. Duncan; Buel, chief ordnance officer; Generals Strong, Millard, Gill, and Steele, McPherson's personal aides.

The officer who was dispatched with the letter to General Dodge had scarcely disappeared when shots were heard to the left and the rear, followed by a volley of small-arms, and at almost the same instant the trees above the company of officers seemed to part asunder as a shell burst through them, while from Dodge's corps incessant firing sounded. Every officer was on his feet and had called for his horse before five minutes had elapsed. General Strong reports the hour as quarter-past twelve. General Clark, in a recent conversation, told me that it must have been about noon. Instantly Generals Logan and Blair left for

their corps. Steele was sent to Decatur, five miles away, with instructions for Sprague, who, it will be remembered, was guarding that point on the railroad. McPherson's staff were dispatched with important orders to different parts of the field, with the exception of General Strong. McPherson, accompanied by this member of his staff and their respective orderlies, dashed forward, taking a position on the right of Dodge's line.*

The scene, says General Strong, was grand and impressive. The flower of both Northern and Southern armies was engaged, and the question of mate and check-mate in this terrific game of warfare was known to be on both sides in the hands of men who added science to their valor, desperation to their daring. The Confederate troops, massed densely in columns of three or five lines deep, pushed from out the dense thickets, and, when the open fields were gained, halted only to open a rattling fire upon the Sixteenth Corps. It is to be supposed—and indeed I believe that the Confederate generals have since stated—that their first shock of surprise was in finding the Union troops ready for attack; but Fuller and Sweeney covered the enemy with a deadly fire, and, to quote the words of one who witnessed it,† “the guns of the 14th Ohio and Welker's batteries fairly mowed great swaths in the advancing columns.” The Confederate troops proved themselves equal to this unexpected emergency, closing their gaps rapidly under the fiery hail-storm pouring down upon them; but flesh and blood could not long endure this, and before reaching the open fields Hood's army at that point was thrown into confusion. Fuller and Sweeney's divisions charged the enemy and drove them back to the woods, capturing many prisoners.

The Sixteenth Corps had proved themselves worthy of McPherson's expectations; and the general from his point of observation saw that Dodge maintained one stronghold of the position to the right and Leggett the other at Bald Hill. A few moments later, General McPherson, who was near the centre of the gap between the flanks of the two army corps, suddenly checked his horse to give his companion, General Strong, an order for Logan, which was for that general to throw Wangelin's brigade across the gap to make the line continuous by connecting with the flanks of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps. Strong was to carry the order, guide the brigade to the point as directed,

* Besides studying official reports and obtaining impressions of people especially connected with that day, I am indebted to General W. T. Clark for direct information on the subject, and to the report of General Strong before the Army of the Tennessee.

† General Strong.

and return to join McPherson at Giles Smith's division. In giving this order, General McPherson spoke for the last time on earth to a familiar friend. Strong turned, dashing up the road towards the Seventeenth Corps. He found General Logan near De Gresse's battery, gave him McPherson's order, and the brigade started towards the gap indicated, but before they reached there they perceived the utter folly of their attempt to fill it, for the enemy were sweeping the roadway desperately with a mass of shot and shell. Strong dashed forward to the left of the Seventeenth Corps, where he expected to meet McPherson, but as he neared the grove he beheld a dismal sight. McPherson's horse, wounded and riderless, was staggering about, the saddle and equipments riddled with bullets. It took the experienced officer but an instant to feel sure that the commander must be somewhere near at hand and in peril, and he was hurrying forward, when he encountered a wounded soldier helped along by an unhurt but terrified-looking man. The wounded man was Reynolds, his companion Sharland, and in faltering accents, "the tears coursing down their cheeks," they announced that McPherson lay dead within the grove, declared that they had a moment previous left his remains, and in corroboration of the statement produced a knife, bunch of keys, etc., belonging to the commander.

A party at once started in search of the general's body. Wangelin's brigade was still waiting orders, and from them a four-mule ambulance was procured. Captain Buel and his orderly, General Strong and his orderly, George Taylor, of the 12th Wisconsin, George Reynolds, and Joseph Sharland made the attempt to dash into the woods and recover the general's remains, Reynolds, although nearly fainting from loss of blood, leading the way. I quote General Strong's words:

"Twenty or thirty yards from the main road we came upon the general's remains. He was lying upon his back, quite dead, his head resting upon a blanket which Reynolds had placed there. His hat, watch, sword-belt, and field-glass were missing, and the book which he carried in the side-pocket of his blouse, which contained memoranda, papers, telegrams, etc., was also gone. His buckskin gauntlets had not been removed, and a diamond ring of value still remained on the little finger of his left hand.

"Raising his body quickly from the ground and grasping it firmly under the arms, I dragged it, with such assistance as Reynolds could offer, through the brush to the ambulance, and with the aid of the other members of our party deposited it therein, and then we all went out as we went in, 'on the keen run.'

"When we reached a safe position the ambulance was stopped, and the general's remains were placed in a proper position: his limbs were

straightened, his arms folded upon his breast, his head tightly bandaged and supported upon a blanket, and thus we carried to General Sherman's head-quarters all that remained of the gallant soldier and beloved commander of the Army of the Tennessee.

"General McPherson was killed or mortally wounded between half-past twelve and two o'clock, and probably in less than two minutes from the time I left him in the execution of his orders."

General McPherson's orderly with him at the time of his death was taken, and remained in captivity for nine months. He was at McPherson's side as they entered the fatal wood. Suddenly a shadowy group of figures rose up on the left, speedily defining themselves to McPherson and his comrade as Confederate soldiers. They called upon the Union men to halt. McPherson raised his hat and turned quickly to the right, when a volley was fired. Thompson's head was struck as his horse dashed against one of the trees, knocking him for a moment senseless. "When I came to," says Thompson, "General McPherson was lying on his right side, his right hand pressed against his breast, and every breath he drew, the blood flowed in streams. . . . I went up to him and said, 'Are you hurt?' He raised his left hand and brought it down upon his left leg, and said, 'Oh, orderly, I am,' and immediately turned over on his face, and straightened himself out, trembling like a leaf."*

* The accounts of General McPherson's death have either been furnished to me by officers of his command or derived from books and papers loaned to me by General W. T. Clark. I have thought it best to put together the story in a condensed form, thus bringing together for the first time the various reports connected with the event.

Captain Beard, of the Confederate army, was in command of the 5th Regiment, Cleburne's division, from which came the shot that killed McPherson. He has furnished to the *Nashville Union* an interesting account of the general's death, in which he says, "He was certainly surprised to find himself suddenly face to face with the rebel line. My own company, and possibly others of the regiment, had reached the verge of the road, when he discovered for the first time that he was within a few feet of where we stood. I threw up my sword to him as a signal to surrender. Not a word was spoken. He checked his horse slightly, raised his hat as politely as if he was saluting a lady, wheeled his horse's head directly to the right, and dashed off to the rear in a full gallop. Young Corporal Coleman, who was standing near me, was ordered to fire upon him. He did so, and it was his ball that brought General McPherson down. He was shot passing under the thick branches of a tree, and as he was bending over his horse's neck, either to avoid coming in contact with the limbs, or, more probably, to escape the death-dealing bullet of the enemy that he knew was sure to follow him. He was shot in the back, and, as Sherman says in his 'Memoirs,' 'the ball ranged upward across the body and passed near the heart.' A number of shots were also fired into his retreating staff.

A moment later, Thompson, half senseless, was taken prisoner.

Young Reynolds, the wounded soldier who found the general directly after Thompson's capture, reports that, having received a wound in the left arm, he was going to the rear to find the field-hospital, when he came upon General McPherson lying upon the ground, mortally wounded. He raised the dying general's head, placing it upon a blanket, and tried to give him a drink of water from his canteen, asking him if he had any message to communicate; but McPherson's lips moved in silence only as he breathed his last. Soon after, Sharland came to the woods and joined Reynolds.

The news of this terrible event spread like wild-fire. General Clark—who I may mention here received his two brevets through the battle of Atlanta—hastened to find Logan and give him the sad tidings. In telling me the story, "I was weeping like a school-boy," said General Clark, "and you can think of the effect of the event, for in the midst of the awful emergencies of that day I remember leaning my head down because I could not check the fresh burst of sobs, and I can venture to say that not a man among us but went back to the fight from that hour with his eyes wet."

Logan was just riding along his own corps when Clark came dashing up, and as the latter told his story it seemed that every nerve and fibre of Logan's powerful frame vibrated with the shock. If there had been a listless hand, a careless heart, or a forgetful mind in the Fifteenth Corps on that eventful day, the scenes which followed must have fired such with the enthusiasm which perhaps comes to men only once in a lifetime. Logan, assuming command in McPherson's place, dashed along the ranks, his first effort being to reassure and stimulate the men, who had been half paralyzed as the news of McPherson's death flashed along the lines. "Never shall I forget," wrote one of Logan's boys, "never will one of us who survived that desperate fight, until our dying day, the grand spectacle presented by Logan as he rode up and down in front of the line, his black eyes flashing fire, his long black hair streaming in the wind, bareheaded, his service-worn slouch hat swinging in his

"I ran immediately up to where the dead general lay, just as he had fallen upon his knees and face. There was not a quiver of his body to be seen, not a sign of life perceptible. The fatal bullet had done its work well: he had been killed instantly. Even as he lay there, dressed in his major-general's uniform, with his face in the dust, he was as magnificent a looking picture of manhood as I ever saw." The name or the rank of the officer whom they had killed was not known to Cleburne's men; and it is due to the Confederate troops who fought in that terrible battle to say that the deepest sorrow for the death of such a man was expressed then and later.

bridle hand and his sword flashing in the other, crying out, in stentorian tones, 'McPherson and revenge!' It made my blood run both hot and cold, and moved every man of us to follow to the death the brave and magnificent hero ideal of a soldier who made this resistless appeal to all that is brave and gallant in a soldier's heart; and this, too, when the very sky was alive with whistling bullets and howling shell! If he could only have been painted as he swept up and down the line on a steed as full of fire as his glorious rider, it would to-day be one of the finest battle-pictures of the war."

How swiftly the battle developed is emphasized by scenes recounted to me by an eye-witness,—pictures which flashed before the vision of those engaged in conflict,—revelations like the sudden slides of a magic lantern defining themselves from out the smoke and dust, from their awful significance burning themselves forever into the minds of those who beheld them. Just before the battle began, some of McPherson's staff had been at Giles Smith's head-quarters, conversing with Belknap, Walker, Saunders, and Hall. An hour later General Clark encountered the body of Major Walker, of the 13th Ohio, stark and dead, a bullet through his forehead. Only those in the field saw the brave deeds done about them. Belknap on the parapet heard a voice amid the sound of crashing guns just at his side: "Shall I bring that flag over, colonel?" Corporal Crowder, of the colored guard, was the speaker. "Yes, if you can." Over the parapet, through the thick of the shot, dashed Crowder, coming back with the battle-flag of the 45th Alabama, a Confederate regiment conspicuous for its valor. So close was the contest, so hand-to-hand the struggle, that the combatants actually talked to one another. As an officer said to me, "I looked one reb in the face and told him he might as well give up: he and I both remember it." Seven different times did the two armies exchange positions. A few moments after the capture of the flag, Belknap, recognizing Colonel Lampley, of the 45th Alabama, actually took him prisoner by pulling him over the parapet by his coat-collar. Writing of this incident later to Belknap, Captain Irving A. Buck, adjutant-general of Cleburne's division, a gallant officer, now residing in Baltimore, says, "Lampley was too slightly wounded to have caused his death, which occurred some days later, and it is supposed that depression from chagrin at his misfortune contributed largely to his sad end. How little cause for shame or mortification he had upon his own account, or that of his command, none other than yourself, who witnessed their gallant conduct, better knows."

A detachment of prisoners being taken about the same time, the question was put, "Who will guard these prisoners?" The flash of a

suddenly-drawn sabre was seen, and the voice of Colonel Jones, of the 53d Indiana, said, "*I will.*" He was seated near a tree, severely wounded, but ordered the prisoners around him, a tragic little company enough, with the dying soldier on guard. An hour later, as a stretcher was bearing the colonel from the field, he breathed his last. General Clark, riding along the line, saw suddenly two figures, first that of Captain Walker, shot in the thigh, then General Force bending over him, and at the same instant a ball passed into the latter's cheek! Soon after mid-day a heavy force of the enemy gathering in the rear of the army captured twelve guns, including De Gresse's famous twenty-pound Parrot guns. Logan, still "*flashing like a meteor*" through serried ranks, led in person Wangelin's brigade, and, by one of the most brilliant strokes ever made in any battle, recaptured every gun. Seven successive charges of the enemy Logan routed, and when the conflict raged at its maddest, and the roll of musketry was fairly deafening, Logan's voice was still to be heard, his dark face and flashing eyes still to be seen. That the horror of that tumultuous occasion did not escape him, in spite of his reckless bravery, was shown when at the unveiling of the McPherson statue in Washington he told briefly but in thrilling sentences the story of that day,—of the valor shown on both sides of the line. "*Right and left, left and right,*" he said, "*like a weaver's shuttle, went the Army of the Tennessee athwart the serried ways, amid heat and dust, shot and shell, blood and tears, weaving the crimson net-work of revenge, till the field was in the bloody toils and fairly won. . . . As wave after wave of Hood's daring troops dashed with terrible fury upon our lines, they were hurled back with a fearful shock, breaking their columns into fragments, as the granite headland breaks into foam the ocean billows. Across the narrow line of works raged the fierce storm of battle, the hissing shot and bursting shell raining death on every hand.*"

Upon this scene, still stormy and desperate, the summer twilight fell and its darkness gathered, the stars coming out in silent majesty above the death-stricken fields, the moonlight painting with awful clearness the conflict as it still raged. On groups of fiercely-fighting men, on Logan's stalwart form, on the prostrate figures of the wounded and the dying, on the awful silence of the dead, who were alive when the sun rose that morning and were in the presence of their Maker now, the starlight and the pale rays of the moon shone alike. Men live who tell the story of the last hours of that battle, but tell it, if with flashing eye, with 'bated breath. Midnight found Logan still urging his men for the conclusion of what was the most desperate and yet triumphant conflict in his career. He had, of course, promptly assumed command of the Army of the Tennessee on McPherson's death, and the

desultory fighting had scarcely ceased when General Clark accompanied Logan to Sherman's head-quarters, where the question of permanent command was discussed. General Logan left with the understanding that he was to continue at the head of the Army of the Tennessee, which he had so victoriously led that day. General Sherman was enthusiastic over Logan's conduct, remarking in his "Memoirs" that on that eventful day of the 22d he had let the Army of the Tennessee fight the battle alone. For reasons, however, which Sherman later explained, the command of the army fell to General Howard.

After the rush and fury of that dreadful day the men who had formed McPherson's military family assembled at Logan's head-quarters, —a mournful group under those midnight stars. Even the triumph of the day was forgotten in the sorrow which every one felt to be personal, for McPherson had not been at any time of his command aloof from his men. There was one mess, one camp-fire, one place of rendezvous, for his officers; and they, accustomed to be cheered by the presence of their commander, gathered sorrowfully together, Logan in their midst, asking themselves why he had not been spared to share in the victory. Those who knew his life's short story talked of its brilliancy and earnest purpose. No uncommon career in its outset was that of McPherson. Born at Clyde, Ohio, he had worked hard to obtain his education. At West Point he had distinguished himself, and then followed the opportunity for putting into practice the gifts which he possessed. The circumstances of that decade in our century were tremendous developers, North and South, and talent sprang into prominence, genius burned at its fullest, under the rush of dramatic and powerful events. McPherson, dead before his five-and-thirtieth year was ended, had lived enough to cover boyhood, youth, and prime; and happy is he whose heroism and example may as proudly endure as the generations roll on.

Early the next day General Sherman rode over the field, and General Orlando M. Poe, chief of engineers, made a careful examination of the locality where McPherson was killed. Later the spot was enclosed, and a cast-iron gun, surmounted by a shell, erected on a pedestal bearing McPherson's name and the date of his death.

General Logan on resuming command of his old corps continued to push forward. Skirmishing and artillery practice were kept up night and day. About this time a little incident occurred which will show the tender depths of Logan's nature. Sherman's army swept Hood's rear, General Logan leading the advance. At Flint River the enemy had planted a masked battery. The puffs of smoke rising whitely above the deep verdure of the trees were the only indications whence came the shots fired by the enemy; and General Logan's staff rode back

and forth, in and out, trying to pierce the column of smoke. Above some evergreen shrubbery in a bend of the road was seen the yellow drapery in the window of a log cabin. One side of the cabin had been cleft in by a shell, and as General Logan and his officers rode up they saw framed in the disjointed door-way the figure of an old woman, whose face, pale and wrinkled, looked as though wistfully searching for human aid or relief. General Logan immediately rode up and asked her whether she was in trouble.

She lifted her sallow, anxious face, sweeping the soldierly form with a glance at first contemptuous and then appealing. "Come in, sir," she said, and led the way into the wretched cabin, pointing with dumb misery at a mattress laid where the shell had burst in the roof. Stretched upon this perilous couch was the figure of a young girl, the widow of one of the Confederate soldiers killed at Atlanta. Half an hour before, she had become the mother of a child. The baby lay beside her, sleeping, but uncared for, and the young mother looked as though she might be drifting away forever out of this strange battlefield in whose din and terror her fatherless child had been born. General Logan at once gave orders for the care of the desolate little family, saw to their safe removal, and a day or two later, although nearly broken down by fatigue and anxiety, rode eight miles to insure their safety. On this occasion the grandmother declared her intention of having the baby baptized, and General Logan stood godfather, the staff selecting the name of "Shell-Anna."

General Logan, after the battle of Ezra Church, and when the fierceness of activity lulled, returned home to take part in the Presidential campaign; but he was once more with his corps when they made that terrible march through the Carolinas of which General Sherman has said that none could form an idea of its perils and privations save those who had endured them. Glaring emergencies and brilliant conflicts carry excitement with them, but these dreary hours in swamp and morass, this breasting of the waters under a pitiless rain, this period of almost starvation and lonely physical misery, test the commander's real heroism; and Logan during that terrible time was always alert and always keen, forgetting no one but himself. Breakfasting by the light of the camp-fire, often with the storm of sleet and hail pouring down upon him, his food dry corn and wretched coffee, it was generally midnight before he again broke his fast; and yet—I have it from the men who served with and under him—his courage never deserted him. General Clark, in speaking of this period, says that the remembrance is like a nightmare to him. For sixty hours he and his men ploughed their way through the watery swamps, dragging artillery-trains out towards the

banks. When the commonplace discomforts of illness are upon us, let us reflect upon the miseries of our "boys in blue" or "boys in gray" during those days; whatever the ultimate result, think of the depressing hours they spent, not knowing what would be the final issue of the work to which they were sacrificing their vitality, the buoyancy of their youth, and every physical fibre of their being. General Clark tells me of a time when, worn with patient endeavor to drag the trains through the water, having stood up to his waist for hours in the muddy streams, the rain pouring down upon his face and weary shoulders, his only food dry corn off the cob, he hailed as the sound of an angel Logan's voice piercing the darkness: "Ho, Clark, are you there?" and through the gloom came the bright dark face and the stalwart form of the chief, bringing cheer to Clark's soul in an hour of depression which seemed as though it must come from the very Valley of the Shadow of Death.

With the end of the war General Logan could not give up the service of his country. We are so accustomed to considering our public men as tools, whether of party, clique, or personal interest, that we fail at times to believe in one who acts from undivided interest, and that interest only the service of the people. Not mine the province to detail the years which General Logan devoted to Congressional and Senatorial work. The vast number of men alive to-day who passed through the war and have returned to civil occupation testifies to the disinterestedness of the man who carried through bills which benefited the nation and respected the individual. His character for honesty, as we all know, stood the test of a Presidential campaign,—what is better still, it stood the test of years of public life,—of home life in which he so bore himself that neither enemies nor friends, neither the public nor the charmed circle at his fireside, could see that he was wanting in that fine integrity which dignifies the man of moderate means, who has the courage to spend only what is his own, and who bows his head before no decree of fashion, no conventionality of custom, which shall lead him to defraud his soul of its honest purpose, his posterity of the inheritance of honor which is their most enduring fame.

The last year of General Logan's life was rendered conspicuously happy to those who loved him, since it saw the realization of the dream which had been his and his wife's, to own a Washington home of their own. The dignified and solid red brick mansion on Calumet Place, built half a century ago, when architecture was solid, interior spaces wide, door-ways ample, and windows many, was selected as a residence by the general and Mrs. Logan. He showed how strong had been his self-denial in not sooner purchasing a home by the exuberance of de-

light with which he found himself master of his "ain fireside,"—nay, shall I not say "*theirs*"? for, as in the days of early married life, when Mary Logan, a girl of sixteen, placed her hand in his and knit her future into his, she was the constant companion of his life, whether in spirit she followed him to the Capitol or to more distant fields of work, or sat beside him reading, writing, discussing, and planning for the career which had never been marred by unholy ambitions, and which was therefore freed from all that was sad or depressing as middle age took the place of youth and its enthusiasms. To them, of course, flocked friends, enthusiastic admirers, the suffering and the afflicted, those to whom a hand-grasp of the general's meant much, a kindly word of suggestion or cheer from Mrs. Logan help and encouragement, and the wheels within wheels of political life revolved about them without marring the harmony of that happy home. His life was active always, regular even in its routine. His work was apt to be brought into the very family circle. There he would sit at his desk, writing, preparing memoranda, notes, etc., while his wife and children were near by, oftentimes looking up to smile and nod at a visitor, sometimes conscious, with good-humored recognitions, that the adjoining room had become half full of guests. He hated, however, wholly to absent himself from family life, although there were times when to pay for this indulgence he and Mrs. Logan together worked out some vexed question through the whole night. On one occasion, as she has herself told me, for three nights and days, while he was searching profoundly into the honor of some question, they never slept, but toiled together, and he triumphed at the end!

The end of this honored life came, as we know, all too swiftly. At Fort Donelson the general contracted the rheumatism from which he suffered excruciatingly at times; but this attack of last December seemed at first only like those which had preceded it,—painful, but not dangerous. He came into the library one morning, having been out among his favorite animals, and complained that the old enemy was upon him. Then, I believe, he drove out. A lady who had wished much to bring a friend to see him told me that, having called at the house, she waited his return, but they were all gathered on the porch, and she was about leaving, when the general appeared, driving in his phaeton. At once she detected something less vigorous or hopeful in his countenance. With his usual kindness of heart, however, he shook off his physical depression and turned to welcome cheerfully the young lady who had come so far just "to shake hands" with the hero of Atlanta. He went into the house, and soon after to his room. For two weeks he lay upon a bed of suffering in the room which seemed

to me, as I stood there yesterday, consecrated by that sad death-scene. No matter what his pain or weariness, say those who watched and nursed him, his interest in the family matters going forward, the pleasant stories of the Fair in which they were so deeply interested, never failed to kindle his smile and the response which always glowed in his eyes, and there were hours precious for all to remember, although, until the very last, no dread of parting was upon them.

I think it was upon the Friday preceding his death—Christmas Eve—that, holding her hand tenderly in his, he asked his wife why she was weeping; but she faltered in her answer, and he was silent, fixing his eyes upon her face and pressing her hand the closer. He knew it then, happily, before the gloom of death was upon him, and doubtless in the watches of that last Christmas Eve on earth, with the one he loved most in life beside him, his peace made with his Creator, his mind went back to the period of joyous and expectant youth, and happy, thrice happy and blest, were they in that hour of parting, since the ambitions with which they had started out in life found them at its close unstained by aught which could make the one to be left turn ever from one recollection in their dear comradeship. What shadows of the old war-days, what forms and faces, may have come to the dying hero! "Peace and good will to all men on earth," was the message of the day which was his last on earth, but the scars of the fight which he had fought for his country and his people John Logan carried as eternal witnesses of his integrity into the presence of his God.

As I write these words in the library so sacred to his life and its many occupations, I lift my eyes and can see on all sides tokens of the man's vitality, which seems to be breathing in the very atmosphere. Portraits of his comrades hang upon the walls; emblems and souvenirs are here and there; but the sword and gun hang peacefully in their places now. The flag yonder is a mute reminder of the past, but it has the glory of Donelson and Atlanta in its faded folds. Across the hall the drawing-rooms have windows open to the sunshine of the winter morning. The light falls upon spaces whose solitude seems to have a hidden meaning; but, while the nation endures, can we say that we have not something present with us always of him to whom the Master must have said,—

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

One who knew him.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

MR. FAWCETT, in the January number, objects to critics and criticism, because of the bitterness of spirit shown by caustic remark and excitable rhetoric in reviewers of books. In reality, it would be hard to recall any review of a book as bitter and biting in tone as Mr. Fawcett's own criticism of critics. He believes in homœopathic remedies, perhaps, and it would be, possibly, injurious to his own cause to show that any criticism could be calm: nevertheless, he would hardly like to claim the honor of having established his point by personal exhibition of the fact that the mere effort to be a critic unhinges one's brain and ruins one's conceptions of courtesy. Mr. Fawcett's criticism is worth noting, however, by those of us who do believe in criticism, and who are therefore willing to listen even to his. His chief objection to book-reviewing is the cruelty of the stinging sarcasm which, from his account of it, one would take to be the spirit of all reviewing; but, so far as it goes to any extreme, is not the tendency of modern criticism far more towards fulsome flattery than towards wholesale depreciation? Here and there one comes across a pin-prick or a mosquito-sting; but, as a rule, the reviewer does not linger long over what displeases him, while he will gush in as many columns as the editor will give him over work that he likes. Mr. Fawcett only generalizes; he does not call by name a single review written in the spirit he deprecates, except one written against one of his own books, while if he had looked about for reviews of books full of the wildest praise or the keenest appreciation, how many he could have found! Secondly, it is to be remembered that critics live only at the will of authors and publishers. If critics criticise, it is because authors and publishers want them to criticise. The professional critic does not exist who would remain a critic if he had to buy the books he reviews; and while author and publisher think it worth while to give him books for the sake of what he may say about them, they must surely expect him to be sincere in saying what he thinks. Nor is it true that his happening to think unfavorably of a book, and saying so with considerable spirit, is the death-warrant to the author's peace of mind that Mr. Fawcett implies. It is entirely true, as Mr. Fawcett states, that "a good book was never yet made unpopular because a critic condemned it," nor a poor one salable because "a critic shouted in its behalf;" but Mr. Fawcett has lost sight of that other indubitable fact that many a book has been "made salable" by a critic's shouting *against* it. Mr. Fawcett cannot be ignorant of the expression "damning with faint praise," and when he implies that "just one brief sentence from the wise and tender lips of such a man as the late Mr. Longfellow" is worth infinitely more to an author than pages by a professional critic in the way of review, he forgets a very significant fact,—that there are "wise and tender" men as incapable as the poor minister who came near ruining Lemuel Barker's career, of telling a young author the sad truth about his work, who drop their "just one brief sentence" in a way kindly, but not invaluable, not, indeed, of half the value to the author that a few columns in the *Saturday Scorpion* might be, even if the latter were not

heavily weighted with praise. How many, many people could repeat kindly verdict on their work from the wise and tender lips of Mr. Longfellow! but how few have risen to the dignity of a column in the *Saturday Scorpion*! The young author may congratulate himself who has risen to the height of being discussed. That your book or your poem or your article has provoked thought, challenged reply, received notice at some length, been thought worthy of the dignity of opposition, is far more of a compliment than any "wise and tender" nothing dropped from kindly lips at the moment, with no sense of responsibility in uttering it, and forgotten the next moment by every one but the amiably-treated author. "The community can find out what they want to read without your multiplex and bewildering counsel," says Mr. Fawcett to the critics. Of course they can; there is not the slightest doubt about it. But critics do not exist for the benefit of the community; *they exist for the benefit of authors and publishers*,—for the benefit of authors and publishers who want the community to find out something about what they *didn't* want to read,—to be piqued to curiosity about what they would otherwise let alone, either by a good deal of praise or a good deal of blame, it does not much matter which. Mr. Fawcett will never be able to convince the community that publishers give away, and authors do without the royalty on, two hundred or more copies of any important book issued from the press, unless they have an overwhelming conviction of the value of criticism. Mr. Fawcett calls attention to what he considers an admirable device of Messrs. Funk & Wagnalls to get rid of superfluous criticism: they send, he says, copies of their books to authors of established fame, requesting a few lines of "opinion," if thought advisable. But is Mr. Fawcett ignorant of the fact that the Messrs. Funk & Wagnalls also send to the newspapers, and that the copies sent to the authors of established fame are only so much *extra* bid for the criticism which Mr. Fawcett thinks of so little importance? And if all publishers were to adopt the plan advised by Mr. Fawcett, of sending books only to "authors of established fame," how long does he suppose the authors of established fame would stand it? The professional critic *has* to read and write about every book sent him; but it is to be feared that the "authors of established fame," left to give an opinion if thought advisable, would think it not advisable a good deal oftener than would suit the publishers and authors who so frequently demand even of reviews and reviewers, "Why haven't you noticed that book yet?" Moreover, is it possible that Mr. Fawcett does not know to how much criticism almost every author subjects his manuscript before publishing it? One might almost say the greater the author the more criticism does he try to secure, from wife, sister, friend, or professional critic. A recent case occurs to me as one of many. An author of established reputation, whose work is sure of acceptance whatever it may be, has been careful, out of pure regard to make his literary art as fine as possible, to subject his manuscript to two professional critics. Though both were personal friends, neither of them was of the "wise and tender" kind; neither hesitated to differ from the author; both knew that to discuss certain points of treatment by no means implied wholesale censure, and the delightful evenings spent in almost violent argument resulted in the talented author's accepting more than one suggestion from his untender critics. In a letter to one of them, he states that he has adopted one of the suggestions, as to the wording of a single sentence, and is amazed to find how it improves the whole aspect of the scene: "It improves the whole flavor of the story," he writes,—"*leaveneth the whole lump*. Indeed, so vital is the improvement, my flesh creeps when I think, What if I had

left it as it stood originally?" and again he says, "I don't believe there is a case on record where one literary worker has received such generous aid from another;" and, mind you, though he kindly says, "one worker from another," the aid was not given by an author "of established fame" to another author, but by a critic to an author. The poor little critic could no more have written the splendid novel than he could have flown; yet he *was* able to give a suggestion which the brilliant author thought of importance enough to record his acceptance of it in such words as the above, though the critic's change implied censure of the severe kind that never falls from the "wise and tender lips" of such kindly patrons as the late Mr. Longfellow.

A. R. W.

THE point of view of M. M., in asking of Margaret Harold, in the Monthly Gossip of January, "Wherein lies 'inartistic failure'?" is that Mrs. Harold is certainly not attractive, but that A. W. R. has not been keen-sighted enough to discover that Miss Woolson meant her to be unattractive. It is certainly, as M. M. claims, the mark of a true artist to be able to delineate a character without showing personal predilections; but, according to M. M., Miss Woolson did, after all, have decided "personal predilections" in regard to Margaret, when she intended to make her unattractive. An artist who does not like his heroine, but delineates her as a human curiosity, rarely is able to let the other personages of his story revolve about her in mistaken admiration, as they do in "East Angels." If he likes his hero, he may take a keen pleasure in letting his other characters all fail to appreciate him, meanwhile keeping the reader in the secret and holding outside sympathy for his Rip Van Winkle; but if he doesn't like him, it would be almost superhuman art to let his other characters feel towards the hero as the people of "East Angels" feel towards Margaret. M. M. states with truth, "Why, history itself is full of Margaret Harolds,—full of self-elected martyrs who slew moral truth and beauty in a stubborn devotion to duty, robbing their idol in the act." But this is not the point in question: the point is, that there have been indeed plenty of "self-elected martyrs," but not plenty of self-elected martyrs who have been admired as charming, as well as respected for their sincerity of purpose. If, as M. M. suggests secondly, Miss Woolson was not using impersonal art, but purposely laboring to show Margaret's overstrained idea of duty to be disagreeable, the "inartistic failure" is certainly conspicuous, inasmuch as the general verdict of the public has had its key-note struck by the reviewer in the *Tribune*, who praises Margaret not only for her sincere conception of "duty," but for being fascinating and "delightful," "altogether winning" and "beautiful." One cannot claim, of course, to have seen all reviews written of a book, but of the very great number of "East Angels" that I have seen, only one, which I wrote myself, failed to find Mrs. Harold "charming" as well as devoted to her conception of duty. This, then, is "inartistic failure," from M. M.'s own point of view; from mine, it is inartistic failure that in trying to depict a colossal ideal, whether intended as her own colossal ideal or as Winthrop's colossal ideal, Miss Woolson has only succeeded in creating a prig.

A. W. R.

BOOK-TALK.

FOR some years past it has been the custom of the small wits of the press to poke fun at Lord Tennyson as a dotard who is unconscious of the fact that he has fallen into second childhood. Were this true, it would be brutal and ungrateful treatment towards one who has added so much to the happiness of all English readers to remind him of the fact. But a poet who at threescore produced such magnificent work as "Rizpah" is no superfluous veteran lagging on the stage. When "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" was cabled over to this country it was received with the usual chorus of derision. The newspaper has not only the first say in such matters, but for some days it has the only say, and the wits seemed to be expressing the general opinion. By this time, of course, the voice of competent criticism has been heard, the poem has received the respectful hearing which it deserved, and the small wit has been silenced. Still, it is not too late to protest against the ungracious and unseemly behavior of these would-be funny men. It is not too late, either, to remind the many worthy people who allow others to shape their opinions for them, that, although donkeys do love to kick dead lions, it is not safe to assume that a lion is dead *because* the donkeys kick him.

Among the criticisms which have thus far appeared, none—not even Mr. Gladstone's—is more notable than that in the *Athenæum*. It has that happy choice of phrase, that wealth of illustration, and that peculiar ingenuity of thought by which the initiated have learned to identify the work of Mr. Theodore Watts. The *Saturday Review* is thoughtful and scholarly enough, and in addition to its regular criticism it has published a little skit intended to burlesque some of the ridiculers of Tennyson's poem. This is simply a pretended criticism of "Caliban upon Setebos," in which Browning is seriously taken to task for the false theology and low ideals of his Caliban. The implied parallel is not a happy one. Tennyson's is essentially a lyrical as Browning's is a dramatic intellect. Browning makes his way to the heart of his characters, looks abroad through their eyes, and speaks with their voice. No one could confound him with Caliban, or with Blougram, Sludge, Hohensteil-Schwangau, or any of the many persons whose natures he has revealed to us in their own speech. Tennyson, on the contrary, is never anybody but himself, even when he aims to be most dramatic.

There is a story that a stranger once calling upon Tennyson was ushered into a dark room. A tall form rose as he entered, and to the stranger's query answered, in melancholy tones, "No, this is not Alfred: this is Samuel, and the gloomiest of the family." This gloom, this melancholia, this "divine despair," as he himself phrases it, is a predominant mood with Tennyson. For a smaller or less balanced mind it would be a dangerous mood. Morbid pathologists tell us that its symptoms are a vague unrest and irritability, a fancied superiority to the rest of the race, a feeling that the victim is made of finer clay than his fellows, a love of isolation, an acute sensitiveness to criticism or opposition as being

prompted by hatred and malice. It causes the arrogance which often distinguishes men of genius as well as patients in the incipient stages of insanity. To men of this stamp the world divides itself readily into two classes, the children of light who agree with them, the knaves and clowns who oppose them. Shelley addressed John Wilson Croker as one of the meanest of all God's creatures, and believed that he was telling the truth. Byron, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, and Carlyle have been betrayed into equal energy of scorn. In the present, Swinburne's shrieks against those who differ from him are traceable to a similar morbid source. Tennyson's intellectual life began at the time when the reaction against Byronic egotism and world-weariness had set in, and his mind was too broad, too far-reaching, not to be in accord with the higher tendencies of his age, and a leader of them. Yet again and again his poems voice the struggle to overcome a natural mood. "The Palace of Art," for instance, in one of his earliest volumes, is a parable, showing how a proud and arrogant soul was converted to the simpler humanities of life and taught to look upon the common run of men with kindness instead of scorn. It is more or less autobiographical, for the same volume contains "The Poet," which teaches the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn, with far more earnestness than the love of love. "In Memoriam" and "Maud" may be placed in juxtaposition, as showing the two opposing elements in the struggle we have noted. The first exhibits the poet under the mellowing, sweetening, and broadening influence of a great sorrow, which takes him out of himself, swallows up all lesser and more selfish emotions, and disposes him to look out upon the world with gentle charity and sympathy. In "Maud," on the other hand, the morbid mood has free vent. The poet loses his grip upon himself and finds a safety-valve through which his pent-up emotions escape with a shriek. Maud, to be sure, is put in the mouth of a madman, an effort is made to give it a dramatic form, but the effort is a failure, and you feel that the poet is simply hiding behind a mask to give himself freer play.

But of the poems in which the struggle and the victory are both celebrated, the most magnificent and characteristic is the original "Locksley Hall." The hero has been jilted, he is sore and wretched, and he abandons himself to his mood. He denounces the girl, her parents, her lover, the dreams of his boyhood, the whole social order. But he recovers himself, recognizes the wildness of his words, and schools himself to self-conquest by dwelling on the insignificance of the individual, the mighty meaning of the race, and the splendid future unfolding before it. With advancing age, however, Tennyson has lost the power of self-conquest. He lets his gloom dominate him. He looks out upon the world, and his weary eye sees only crime, vice, horror, wretchedness. He may be wrong in his point of view. But art does not concern itself with points of view. You may not agree with the beliefs of Voltaire, Luther, or Cardinal Newman, you cannot deny them magnificent genius. And nobody with a feeling for poetry can fail to be carried away by the thunderous energy of Tennyson's denunciations of the present. "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" is not only interesting for its self-revelations, it is the most virile and vigorous bit of verse that has appeared in recent English literature.

"The Promise of May," a drama, which was performed some years ago in London with small success, and which is now bound up in the same volume with "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After," only offers one more evidence that Tenny-

son's intellect is not a dramatic one. Some of the village scenes are idyllic and pretty, and are even illumined by some gleams of humor,—a rare quality with Tennyson,—and the character of Dora has a certain sweetness and charm. But the mere fact that the whole aim of the piece is to enforce a serious moral shows a comical inability to appreciate the temper of an average audience. The moral itself—that agnosticism and the seduction of young girls go hand in hand—is hardly a fair one to draw until we have some authoritative statistics as to the relative frequency of seduction among professed agnostics and professed Christians; and one cannot help feeling an amused sympathy for that eccentric agnostic who rose from his seat while the play was being performed and loudly protested against the injustice done to his co-antireligionists.

Some dozen years ago, when "A Passionate Pilgrim" and "The Madonna of the Future" and other little masterpieces were appearing in the *Galaxy* and the *Atlantic* over the signature of Henry James, Jr., many of us who were active readers of periodicals used to be exasperated that this brilliant young author seemed to be making so little headway with the public. "Roderick Hudson" came out, and rather disappointed us; "The American" followed, and justified our most sanguine expectations; yet Henry James, Jr., though he had a small number of devoted admirers, though many critics praised him, was still ignored by the public. At last "Daisy Miller" made him known to two continents. Bret Harte, again, had published his "Condensed Novels" and his "Luck of Roaring Camp, and other Sketches," he had gained a following, and a very enthusiastic one, but he had no public until the appearance of the "Heathen Chinee." Among the number of brilliant young writers whose work is growing in strength and in favor, are there not several whose names may, by some lucky stroke, to-morrow or the next day become household words? There is J. S. of Dale, for example. In any brief summary of modern American literature his work might be overlooked without evoking any general protest. Mr. Howells, in his late admirable little chat upon short-story writers, has forgotten him altogether. Yet this author has at his command such stores of pathos and humor, such delicate fancy, such exquisite grace, that it is a marvel he is not better known. In the "Sentimental Calendar," which he has just published through Charles Scribner's Sons, there are three stories at least—"Mrs. Knollys," "The Consul at Carlsruhe," and "In a Garret"—which ought to have made his literary fortune. They are all slight in texture, hackneyed, if you choose, in plot, yet the witchery of art he has thrown over them makes them positive masterpieces in their way. When will he produce his "Daisy Miller"?

Barrett Wendell is another writer who is less known than he deserves to be. His "Duchess Emilia" had a *succès d'estime*, but it was not widely popular. His last book, "Rankell's Remains" (Ticknor & Co.), is a masterly satire. Its moral is excellent, and much needed at these times when Mammon is the only god that has retained a more than tepid worship. The hero is an amalgamation of A. T. Stewart and Jay Gould, and the leading incidents in the career of those worthies have been skilfully blended into unity. The book does not pretend to be more than a sketch. Only the bold outlines of Rankell's character are given. We are shown both sides of his nature, to be sure,—the tenderly sentimental side which he strove against and repressed, the hard, cruel, and repulsive side which he cultivated and presented to the world. These are roughly yet powerfully

drawn; they affect you strongly in this crude shape, but the author does not attempt to pluck the heart of the mystery and harmonize these conflicting elements. In other words, Rankell's character is presented as a problem. Now, a social philosopher like George Eliot recognizes no problems, but aims to give the solution that robs them of their problematic character. We can understand the banker Bulstrode, in "*Middlemarch*;" under similar circumstances we can imagine ourselves becoming Bulstrodes. But we do not understand Rankell. We are simply interested and perplexed.

The blight of tiresomeness which has fallen of late upon Henry James seems to have affected also some of the younger men who have grown up under his influence. Mr. W. H. Bishop's "*The Golden Justice*" would have been an excellent novel if he had not tried so hard to make it a great one. The central idea is worthy of Hawthorne. The character of David Lane, whom a sudden ungovernable impulse has urged into crime, who hides his secret from the world, yet feels the constant sting of conscience and writhes under the honor and success that crown his career, and who is urged to the extraordinary substitute for confession which renders the golden statue of Justice above the courthouse a haunting Nemesis, is admirably worked out. All the purely romantic part, in fact, is worthy of high praise. But the political scenes, the legal scenes, the scenes of low life, the long conversations between the men and women, who seem afflicted with a desire to present their own characters artistically and picturesquely,—these, with all their cleverness, retard the progress of the story and distract the reader's interest.

"*The Memoirs of Robert E. Lee*," which has been written by General A. L. Long, with the assistance of General Marcus J. Wright (J. M. Stoddart & Co.), will take its place in the literature of the civil war as the authoritative life of the leader of the Confederacy. General Long was a member of General Lee's personal staff from the time of the first fight before Richmond to the end of the war, and took an active part in the important engagements during that period. He therefore writes as an eye-witness of these events and a trusted personal friend of the hero of them. His style has the enthusiasm and ardor which we are accustomed to from natives of warmer latitudes than our own, and he communicates something of his spirit to the reader. The value of the work is enhanced by the documentary evidence and the correspondence which he has gathered together. The maps are remarkable for elegance and for accuracy.

Among the young poets who have recently come to the fore and give excellent promise for the future, Clinton Scollard occupies a high place. His second book, "*With Reed and Lyre*," shows a distinct advance upon "*Pictures in Song*." Our readers cannot have forgotten "*As I came down from Lebanon*," with its Oriental picturesqueness, nor that pleasant little idyl "*The Dryad*." Many of the other poems, "*In the Library*," "*Premonition*," "*In Woods Arcadian*," "*The Book-Stall*," etc., have a dainty grace and a fine feeling for the niceties of rhythm.

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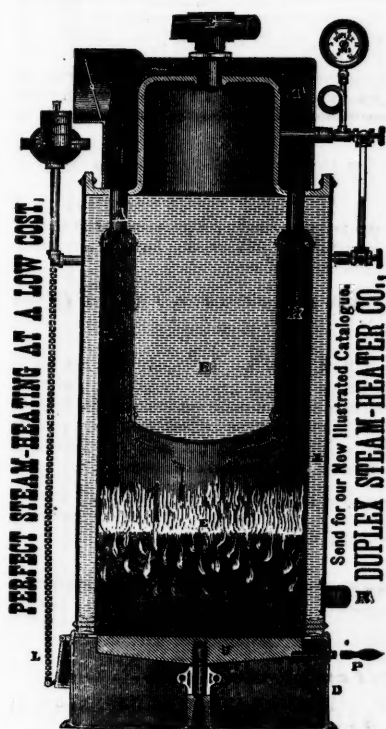
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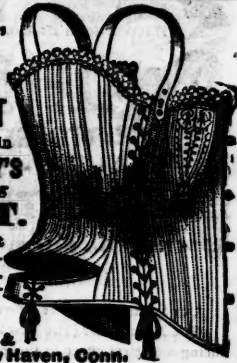
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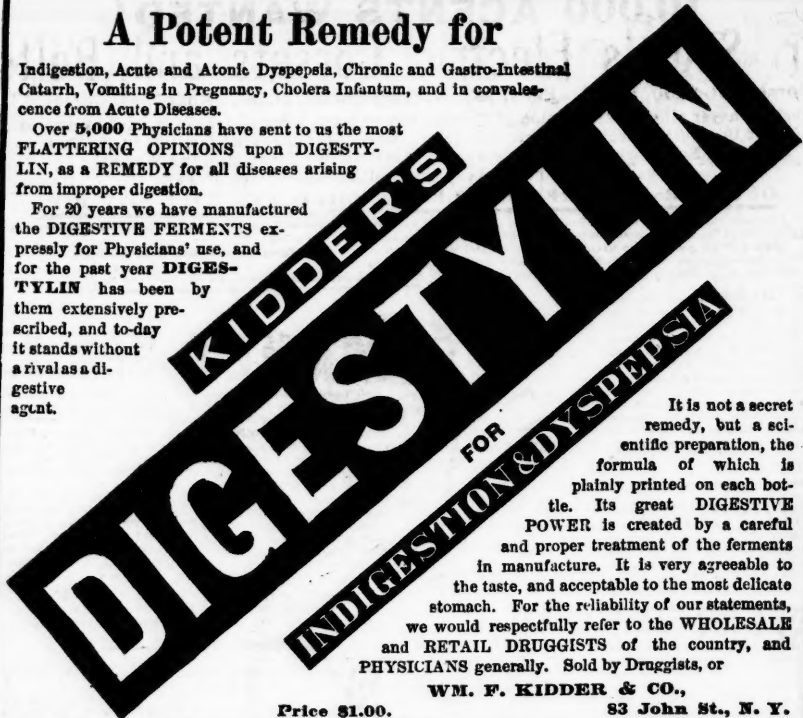


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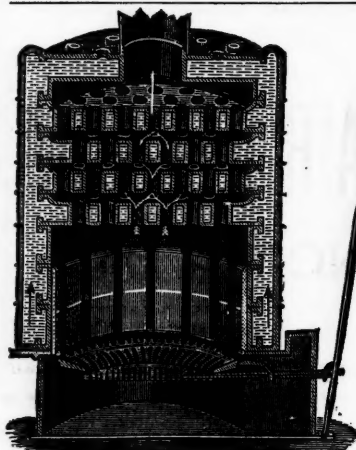


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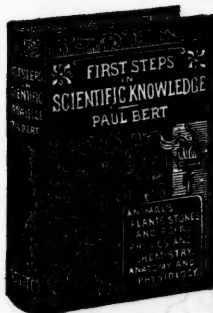
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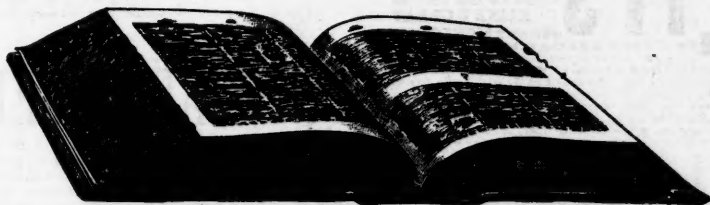
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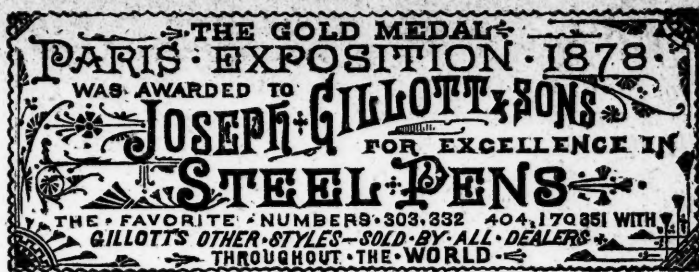
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